/117 cont./

628 tendency toward the independence of the next smaller parts acting on this plane and forming it -- namely, the villages.

These hostile relationships between the villages are external evidence of a centrifugal force in Waika culture seeking detach-
628 ment. The opposite tendency, the centripetal force toward bind-
574 ing the villages together, finds its expression in active intercourse
438 for trading and visiting. These trips, which are performed with such zeal that practically every second day there is some association with another village, from or to it, can be divided into sev-
438 eral groups, according to their purpose. First, trips purely for trade take place: each village prefers to produce or procure a certain article of the material culture so that it practically has a monopoly on it. One village supplies especially fine tobacco, another is favorably located in a place where much arrow-cane grows, a third produces pots because good clay is present in the vicinity, another is the supplier of hunting dogs for the neighborhood, and the village closest to us naturally barters primarily with European ironware. This formation of centers for specific goods naturally favored the development of commercial traffic; the trading itself is carried out over very long periods and thus resembles a gift-exchange behind which there is a certain amount
437 of compulsion. When one knows that the partner has more objects of a kind than he justifiably needs for himself, it is requested very urgently, and the one so entreated may not refuse, if he does not want to risk enmity and war -- he can, of course, get his revenge
[182] in his own way the next time. This system successfully prevents
[556] any accumulation of capital; no Waika possesses noticeably more
[565] than his neighbor; there are no social distinctions, and consequently no vertical classes.

628 Besides trade, the transmission of news, which proceeds in the
574 form of a /118/ ceremonial conversational-singing and not in
[203] simple dialogue, is also one purpose of such trips, as are wife-
[533] seeking and courting in other villages. As a rule all these trips
[584] are made by a group of men or young people who are guests for one or at most two nights in the strange village and then, after the trading has been done, oddly enough not until the last minute

/118 cont./

on the morning of departure, return to their own village. In contrast to this hastily accomplished visiting by small groups or even individuals, there is the migration of whole villages. During the great palm-fruit festival, which takes place in February and of which I shall show you a film in a few days, the villages visit each other, which is often done in such a way that the two villages celebrate first in the settlement of the one and the other. The various above-mentioned purposes of this intervillage intercourse are naturally combined in practice. The trading and visiting trips are responsible for the remarkable cultural unity of the Waika region, and the consciousness of this in the minds of the inhabitants. On the other hand, in many cases they are the occasion and opportunity for quarrels and warfare; refusal to trade and refusal of a girl lead at least to ill feeling, and, as was reported to us, neutral villages are sometimes invited to the palm-fruit festival solely for the purpose of attacking the men at a favorable moment in order to kill them and keep the women as booty. The language has a special word for this type of hostile act, and the procedure was described to us in detail, so there can be no doubt about its occasional occurrence.

In summary, the following may be said about the intervillage relations presented in brief form. The balance between the two tendencies, the binding one and the separative one, both of which -- probably in correspondence to each other -- are expressed in remarkably vivid form, stamps the picture of the political organization in Waika country. The separative forces, in that they protect the detachment of the villages, prevent the formation of alliances on a wider scale, which could lead to political ascendancy, to regional groupings, to divisions -- in any case to a political unit extending beyond the village. Thus, in a cultural sense, these separative forces act indirectly in the same direction as the binding ones: both promote and maintain cultural homogeneity in a large territory. For since the individual villages are too weak to detach themselves from the leveling tensions /Verspannung/ with their neighbors, but, on the other hand, lasting, stable alliances cannot be achieved, political and cultural divisions

Surára
Pakidai
Shiriana

/74 cont./

6. Tribute payments and greeting ceremonial

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651
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Two or three times a year a Xiriâna chief and 18-20 warriors of this tribe come to the Surára as well as to the Pakidái, in order to collect tribute from their satellites (see also pp. 13 and 19). This visit is always carried out /75/ according to a regular protocol. First the chiefs squat down opposite each other, place the right hand on the left shoulder of the other, and hold the left hand in front of the mouth. They remain in this position for about two hours and, singing, exchange their news (345). The warriors of

> 345. I, too, was greeted in this fashion by the Surára chief as well as by the Pakidái chief.

the Xiriâna and Surára or Pakidái stand around in a circle and listen, their faces immobile. All the women and children remain lying in their hammocks during the ceremonial, or they sit with anxious faces by their hearths. When the greeting is ended, the Surára or the Pakidái chief makes a sign, whereupon his men run off and fetch knives, axes, pots, etc., and also bananas and pupunha fruits, which they put down in front of the Xiriâna chief. The latter picks up the objects and distributes them to his warriors, one after the other. When each is richly laden, they leave the maloka with measured step and disappear into the forest. The Xiriâna chief is now the only one left behind. For him, however, particularly valuable objects must be brought. Above all, it is now the duty of the Surára or Pakidái chief to offer precious things of his own, perhaps a woven hammock which was given him by civilized people, a large pot, a bush knife, or a particularly beautiful chain of glass beads. Along with these, he usually sets down a basket of bananas and pupunha fruits. When the Xiriâna chief, finally satisfied, nods his head, the Surára or Pakidái at last feel relieved. There is now a concluding dialogue sung by the two chiefs, whereupon the Xiriâna chief rises and, heavily loaded for his part, strides toward the forest where his warriors are

/75 cont./
619 already waiting for him. After such a visit, the Surára and Pakidái
651 are thoroughly stripped, but at least the constraint under which
576 they were put during these hours has been removed, and one soon
574 hears them laughing and joking again (346).

[114]

346. For traveling investigators who come into contact with tribes of this region it is also very important to make sure, in offering presents and trade articles, that valuable objects are held back at first, because the chief always takes his share last. A visitor who is not familiar with this mentality and stands empty-handed at the end would incur the enmity of the chief and thus of the entire tribe from the outset.

7. Making a Living

433 a) General
178 At present the Surára and Pakidái are in a state of transition
241 from an exploitative to a productive economy. The traditional means of acquiring food, hunting and gathering, still played a dominant role among these Indians at the time of my visit, but I could see that most of the members of the tribe, especially the men, already manifested a great interest in agriculture, which had
[622] been introduced a generation or two before. The chiefs in particular proved to be shining models, for they set a good example in
000 all the work in the roça (forest clearing) (347). According to their

[174]

347. The myth about the origin of the banana (see p. 249) clearly shows that the Surára and Pakidái were formerly only hunters and gatherers.

/214 cont./

554 him to commit a similar excess. In their traditional duels no one dares to fight with the guapo, for they are afraid that in the heat of the encounter he may lose control of himself and kill
[621] his adversary. Apparently there is only one guapo in each local group, and, from what can be seen, he may have the social mission to eliminate the weak elements in the group, in spite
554 of his not realizing that that is his function. It was explained to us,
769 for example, that on occasion the neighboring group is invited to
628 the feast of the dead, when, the ashes reduced to fine powder,
[266] they ingest those of their dead companions. This invitation is extended to the enemy group in particular if it is known with certainty that among the dead whose ashes they are about to take there is one who died through the magical intervention of a member of the enemy band. During the ceremony the sablf shaman, before opening the gourd which contains the ashes, points out to the guapo of his group the probable murderer in the opposite band, who, in order to avoid complications, is always the weakest man in the group. The feast proceeds as though nothing had happened, but the enemies who lost the man during the feast invite their adversaries to celebrate the feast of their dead also.

554 Old people, for their part, do not seem to be very safe be-
[888] fore this element, /215/ and some Sanemá of the Ventuari ex-
[574] plained that the guapo must treat visitors in this way in order to prove his courage. It would be interesting to know in greater detail the function of the Sanemá guapo and to find out whether these are isolated cases or a traditional phenomenon.

842 The Sanemá believe that the child exists in the father,
162 who passes it to the mother so that it may grow and be born. In the Sanemá communities which we visited on our expedition
855 we were surprised at the small number of children to be found in the settlement. The parents showed much affection for their children, and when these latter have grown somewhat they participate, to the degree that their age and strength allow, in all the activities of the adults.

881 It seems that they are acquainted with rites indicatory of
000 the onset of puberty for a boy or girl. The first menstrual period

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

brought the canoe shooting past us like an arrow, to finish up in the big pool, where some hard paddling brought them to the bank.

At Llantarifia we found many signs of Guayca occupation, but there was no one about. Luis Antonio urged us on, as usual, explaining that we should catch up with his people further down, at what he called 'Wide-Beach River'. As it turned out, we found them there, in a rough encampment on Samatari lines—if it hadn't been for the fact that some of the faces were half familiar, and that a few of the men were wearing loincloths of red material we had provided, we might have taken them for Samatari.

'They've come here after the fruit, because it's the dry season.' Such was Luis Antonio's explanation, but it contradicted what he had said not long before, when he had assured us that his people had crossed the river because they feared an enemy attack. 'Much war,' he had told us then. Our man had been trying to give a heroic touch to what was very simple fact: his people were out looking for provisions, they weren't on the war-path at all. But this betrayed their nomadic origin, which Uarema, who knew civilization and knew how far removed the Samatari were from it, was anxious to disclaim and conceal. He had reached that stage of sophistication where he preferred to accept and admit the barbarism of war but not that of hunger.

When we slept with the Uarema Indians that night it was just like being back among the Samatari, such was the resemblance between these tribes and so similar their behaviour. Once more we ate the sacred *sopah* and a whole series of fruits we were familiar with, and went round sampling little leaf-parcels which the Guayca, with genuine hospitality, were pleased to offer us. There was tapir, deer, lapa, guan, curassow, all sizes of fish, bananas, cassava-bread in the Makiritari style, fine pawpaws and little pineapples—the kind that burn the lips.

The effect of such abundance on us was euphoric. Did our euphoria then spread to the Indians, or was it the other way about? A general dance started, with all the old songs, but for us at any rate it was soon over. In our weak state everything began to go round and round before our eyes, and we felt slightly sick. Hashimo was grinning. He looked rather like an animal let out of its cage, as he went about talking to his kinsfolk, who were crowding round like monkeys to listen. He was making gestures towards Enrico and me, evidently telling about various incidents of our captivity. Then I shouted out, in the Samatari medicine-man's tone, and imitating his vocal effects:

/447/

The Fiesta of the Harvest of "Pijiguao"

527 The fiesta of the harvest of the fruit of the "pijiguao" palm
574 (Bactris gasipaës) is perhaps the most important event of the year. During this harvest everybody has food to spare and consequently
[484] can receive all those who want to visit them. As a result of this there is a great deal of traveling during this period.

[628] Frequently two or three settlements gather in order to celebrate the fiesta. Then one part will go to celebrate the same fiesta in other friendly settlements.

The hosts, and sometimes the visitors as well, go out on a hunting trip, which lasts for several days, until they collect a sufficient quantity of meat. This meat is smoked and preserved for the fiesta.

527 When the hunters come back, the fiesta begins at night with considerable joy and singing. The hunters gather and march around the interior patio of the settlement several times. Then
[526] there begins a mock battle with cudgels. Those who have axes or machetes use these in place of cudgels. They are waved about in the air in a way similar to an attack in fencing or fighting with cudgels. The weapons clash together, but blows are not struck at the body.

After this comes the fire procession. Every man takes a burning torch from the fire and joins the others who go around and around the periphery of the great circular patio formed by the huts. From time to time, when passing in front of one of the surrounding ranchos, they rap with the torch on one of the straight supports which hold up the roof, scattering sparks in the air.

[526] Afterwards, they do what is known as "golpeo al pecho" /hitting the chest/. The boys and a few men pair off against those of another settlement and carry out a duel of blows on the chest. One will present his chest while the other hits it with the side of the fist.

[533] All of these acts are carried out amidst much jubilation and singing. Sometimes this is repeated on the following night.

/448/

527 After this comes the daytime ceremony. A great deal of
276 "yopo" is prepared and placed near the center of the group of huts. Some six or eight boys of the "host" settlement march around the patio and then toward the place where the "yopo" is. Another group of boys follows them rapidly. As each group arrives at the center, the boys receive a puff of "yopo" in the nose. After each and every one of the boys has taken the "yopo" through the nasal passage, the men follow them in the same way, in groups of six or eight. And when all of the "hosts" are in the center, the ones representing the "guest" or visiting settlement, follow them in the same "yopo" ceremony.

527 When each and every one has received his portion of "yopo,"
526 the group of men begins to march around in the center of the
276 circular patio of the settlement. After a few minutes have passed, the men begin to separate off in pairs. The most violent of them begin having duels of blows on the chest. Others, seated by pairs on the ground, talk among themselves in the manner of the crooned messages.

The duels of blows on the chest receive the greatest attention. All those who are not paired off are watching. Also many of the women come to watch them. The group of onlookers approaches so close that only a part of them can manage to see what is actually happening.

527 Some of the men who have taken too much "yopo" lie im-
276 potently on their backs and are dragged out of the sun into the shade of the houses by the women.

And others who have taken a certain excess of "yopo" keep walking around, and their wives have great difficulty in keeping them inside the settlement. If they manage to get into the woods with no one watching over them, they may find themselves in grave danger.

● [574] After a while, everything begins to quiet down. Meat and
[484] as much "pijiguao" as it is possible to carry are given to the guests for their return trip. Thus they may take as long as a week on the trip to their settlement without running out of provisions.

/468 cont./

Traveling and Transportation

487 They make almost all their trips on foot by paths and trails. Bridges are built over the largest rivers. Other rivers are waded or crossed on tree trunks.

/469/ New paths are marked by breaking branches in passing. On old roads they indicate the path or paths which have not been taken, leaving some object or a little pile of leaves at the entrance of same. A stick may be tied to an abandoned dwelling to indicate in what direction the former occupant has moved. 621 (A settlement may split up into groups when it abandons the 166 site in the area of the "conuco," and therefore this sign does not necessarily mean that the entire settlement has gone off in that direction.)

166 The Guaika /Waica/ travel frequently, but generally not 628 very far. The nearest settlement -- perhaps a day away -- is usually as far as they go. The settlement beyond this might be an enemy settlement, or at least not very friendly. Even neighboring settlements have such bad relations with one another that 628 they rarely visit among themselves. But the settlements which ● 574 are on friendly terms visit each other very frequently, and, when both live in the areas of the conucos, visitors come and go between them every few days.

574 The reasons for visiting are principally to see friends or to stay until their own "conuco" (which might be in a period of little production) begins to produce again.

Standards of Living

513 [349] The Guaika /Waica/ consider it essential to sleep every night under a roof. Thus, they always build some sort of shelter.

[354] A fire is also essential. A Guaika will not sleep without a fire at night. He needs it to obtain heat and to protect himself from animals, and with the fire he feels safer from evil spirits.

/469 cont./

513 352 The third essential thing is the hammock. The Guaika must have a hammock in order to sleep at night. In his dwelling he has a cotton hammock or a hammock made of vines split longitudinally. On a hunting trip he may travel with his hammock made out of cords of vine or without carrying any. In this latter case, each night he will make a temporary hammock /470/ out of cords of bark, and, in case he stays in the same general area, he will use it for several nights. Then, in order to travel light, he will abandon this hammock of cords of bark and will go to his home, where his good hammock awaits him.

262 574 [251] The supply of food which the Guaika have is generally good and apparently quite nutritious. From time to time there is a shortage, and they do not accumulate reserves. Shortages are generally not too serious, for which reason they can usually bear the period of privation, subsisting from a neighboring settlement, which will be paid back for the visit when in its turn bad times come to it.

261 726 The complete loss of a "conuco" as a result of being constantly driven out of the area by an enemy is a quite serious matter. We observed a settlement (that of Bichaasatedi) subsisting with great difficulty for a year until its new "conuco" began to produce, after having been driven out of their former area by a hostile group (the one from Liakoatedi).

352 The Guaika do not make seats, but they rarely sit on the ground if they can avoid it. Generally they sit in a hammock or on a piece of firewood.

512 On an ordinary day the Guaika awake with the dawn. The wife prepares the roasted platanos for the whole family. Around 7:30 or 8:00 the majority of the inhabitants of the settlement go to work in the "conuco." Those who remain in the settlement in general rest the entire morning. Some few women gather in a party and go out to make firewood out of a dead tree, recently fallen. Those who work in the conuco begin to come back at noon. On the way to the settlement they bathe in the stream. After a brief rest each person roasts a few platanos for his lunch. Then, around 2:00 in the afternoon, the [276] "yopo" is prepared, and it is blown up the noses of many of the

/470 cont./

512 men. Some of them sing in singsong voices to influence the
[276] spirits, while others wander around like drunks. A few do not take any "yopo" at all. These "yopo" cantilenas generally last for about two hours.

In the afternoon a few more women, including some of those who were in the conuco in the morning, go out to look for /471/ firewood. Other women devote themselves to spinning cotton. At about 5:00 in the afternoon the women and girls go down to the stream to fill all the gourds or totumas.

[824] A little before dark, the evening meal ends. Palm leaves
[721] are placed so as to obstruct the entrances to the paths against
[796] the coming of wandering spirits and also to make greater difficulty for any attacking band coming from an enemy settlement. Every house lights its own fire and prepares for the night. At about 7:00 P.M. all is silent.

[535] But if the moon comes out, the women and children may
[533] continue singing and dancing until well into the night. Or when
[203] there are visitors who arrived during the day, there might be
[594] crooning of news throughout the night, until the coming of the sun puts an end to it.

Names

553 Every individual receives a name given by his parents. Un-
551 til the child receives a name, he is called by any of the standard names that are applied to small children. The use of these standard names is usually prolonged for several years after the boy or girl has received his own name. It is taboo to give one person the name of another. There are no homonyms or namesakes. An individual might be given the name of a plant, an animal, an action, an aspect, or sometimes simply be given some name invented by his parents.

551 Nicknames are given freely. Some have a root, others do not. Usually they are very descriptive and frequently very biting.

It is not good manners to call a person by his name, if it can be avoided. It is always better to say: the older brother of so-and-so, the older sister of so-and-so, the husband of so-and-so, the father of so-and-so, or the mother of so-and-so.

/472 cont./

574 A visitor who comes to a settlement where only one family is friendly with him can expect a very different reception. He can certainly expect the welcome of his friends, /473/ but the rest of the settlement, rather than applauding him, will shout at him: "Enemy group attacking! Enemy group attacking!" And at the same time they will point at him with their bows and arrows and also point all around as if they were going to fight an attacking enemy group. Quite a chilly reception, to say the least!

865 When two lads become angry with each other and fight, each one must be prepared to receive a blow equal to the one which he has given. If one hits the other on the chest with the fist it is expected that the former will present his chest to the latter to receive a like blow, and so forth. *The scuffle continues* until one of the two considers that he has received enough and refuses to return the blow which he has just received, or until one of the two combatants really gets angry and loses his temper. Then, in general, the others intervene. Frequently, when two boys are fighting, they are encouraged to keep hitting each other until both come to wish that they had never started the fight. The boys quickly learn to be careful not to start a scuffle.

If someone maltreats a lad smaller than he, he can be sure that he will be paid back for it by one of the relatives of the little one or by some spectator.

Marriage and War

584 A matrimonial union can be arranged considerably in advance with the consent of all who are interested. A girl nine years old may already be engaged to some boy.

But more frequently the girl reaches puberty without any arrangement having been made for her future marriage. Then the suitors not only have to solicit the favor of the girl, but also that of the whole settlement where she lives. Frequently it respects the selection made by the girl and rejects the suitors whom she does not want, but the settlement might give her in marriage against her wishes.

/151/

Raids among the Guaika

By James Barker (*)

114

* Mr. James Barker has prepared this work as a result of his many years with the Guaika /Waica/ Indians of the Upper Orinoco, Venezuela. In this Boletín (Year I, Vol. I, Caracas, June-December, 1953, Nos. 3-4, pp. 433-489 /see 7: Barker, this file/) he presented a report of his observations under the title of "Memoria sobre la cultura Guaika /Memoir on the Culture of the Waica/." The present work is the result of his observations, which, revealed in an objective and simple manner, are of positive value for ethnologists and ethnographers.

121 I have been asked for more information about the raid. As I am not sure of which one I am asked about, I will tell about several, especially those about which I have quite detailed information.

574 628 In February of 1951 the aldea of Liacoatjeti invited the aldea of Bisheasetjeti to a Pijiguao or palm festival. The men of Liacoatjeti had gone on a special hunt to get a supply of meat. There was to have been an abundance of every type of food. There were to have been special dances, the taking of yopo, and other things which they do on such festive occasions.

574 628 721 But the invitation was a trick which those of Liatcoatjeti /sic/ had planned in order to be able to kill, if possible, all of the men of Bisheasetjeti and capture their women. Batanoetjeti and other aldeas which were enemies of Bisheasetjeti were invited to hide outside of the aldea and shoot at any man who tried to get away. Since they did not need to feed anybody, the Liacoatjeti did not bother to go hunting.

/152/

574 628 721 [262] [411] The majority of those from the aldea of Bisheasetjeti accepted the invitation. They entered Liatcoatjeti, hanging their hammocks from the trees, and they were served a soup made of boiled ripe plantains. Then suddenly they were attacked with axes, machetes, and other weapons. The leaders and the oldest were attacked first, and most of them died, but many of the younger men managed to escape, dropping everything and running for their lives. The enemies who were lying in wait outside also took the same road as those who had fled from the aldea.

727 The majority of the women were captured, but at the first opportunity all of the older ones escaped and returned to Bisheasetjeti. But the younger girls were afraid to run away, and for that reason most of them are now the wives of the men of Liacoatjeti or of their friends.

628 731 [499] The aldea of Majecototjeti (Platanal) was short of food. They constructed a bridge over the Orinoco and crossed it to make a visit to Bisheasetjeti and stay until their own farms might be able to produce more food. The people of Majecototjeti came to Bisheasetjeti just at the moment when those who had managed to escape were arriving and reassembling.

628 411 721 A messenger was sent to Yabitjaotjeti for arrows, and about six or seven boys from Yabitjaotjeti came with him, each one carrying a large bundle of darts /dardos, darts, lances/. These were quickly put together and their points put on. Bisheasetjeti was rearmed, and Majecototjeti better armed than before and 166 ready to attack. The site of the aldea of Bisheasetjeti was aban- 722 doned at this time, for fear that the enemies might follow them 628 to it. Both aldeas lived on what was produced by that of the Majecotatjeti /sic/. They crossed the Orinoco every three days to obtain a load of bananas from the farm located on the north bank.

One of the times when they came to get food, they found that the river had carried off the bridge. No one had a boat, and they could not cross. About three days later the men of Majecototjeti returned to the river and built their houses on the cleared place of the aldea. Meanwhile they lived in the forest 000 near there. One day, that is to say after the aldea was ready,

/156 cont./

721 In December of 1953 the Shibaatía-tjeti came back to make
123 another raid, accompanied by the Comishibueitjeti. But the Majecototjeti had camped outside, on the other side of the river. Some of the Shibaatía-tjeti approached us carrying an arrow, but leaving their bows in the woods with the other men. They explained that they were friendly visitors and asked where the Majecototjeti were, because they were supposed to visit them. But their black war-paint showed that they had come on a raid. (Visitors are painted with red or mulberry color, but not black.) When they saw that they were not going to get us to tell them where the people were, they asked us to give them matches and fishhooks. They gave us in exchange some knives made of tooth. After this things calmed down, but from this time on the people of Majecototjeti have lived inside their palisades when they were near their main farm.

[302] [574] [822] [412] [361]

166 The people of Majecototjeti started a new farm called
361 "Joitja-tjeca" to the south of the Orinoco, where they could
721 live without palisades and feel safe from raids by the Shibaatía-tjeti. The Majecototjeti did not plan any retaliatory raid, because they said, "None of our men have been killed."

727 In September of 1954 I had camped with the Majecototjeti at
361 their new farm to the south of the Orinoco River. Everybody was
[114] calmer there, and they seemed to feel freer than at any time since the first raid by the Shibaatía-tjeti had put them on the alert almost a year before.

222 Anyone who wished to do so could go out and gather fruit,
[226] fish, or hunt crabs, even in small groups. The boys were having
411 fun shooting at the fish in the many streams with their little arrows
[857] of split palm shoots and bows made of a curved stick and a piece of twisted bark. It was the season of the moriche fruit, and the /157/ women went out almost every day and came back carrying
726 baskets full of this fruit. One afternoon about 1:00 P.M. some came to the aldea and said that a great number of tracks had been seen not far from the aldea. A group of men went out to investigate.

/160 cont./
114 into the aldea of Platanal and shot at one of the men. His shot
721 wounded "Lublo-juu" in the thigh. Nevertheless, since he recovered, there was no gathering for a raid. The men of the Frobenius expedition treated his leg and prevented complications, since the wound was quite deep.

574
628 At the beginning of February 1955 the Macolimutjeti and the Bisheasetjeti were invited to a Pijiguao or palm (Peach) festival among the Majecototjeti. The Macolimutjeti all came, men, women, and children. But the Bisheasetjeti were somewhat afraid. The Majecototjeti had been somewhat friendly with the Batanoatjeti, bitter enemies of the Bisheasetjeti, and the Bisheasetjeti feared a trick. (Years before, in 1951, they had been tricked by the Llacoatitjeti.) But so as not to show their bad faith, the men came (or at least a few of them), but none of the women, in order thus to reduce the "desirability" of a trick to steal them.

726 In March of 1955 the men of Platanal had gone for a new attempt at a raid, leaving the rest of the people in the principal aldea, located to the north of the Orinoco. One day, when /illustration appears here/ /161/ all of them except the lame boy were out of the aldea, the Shibaatfa-tjeti returned. They found "Joashimocaoue," who was returning from the farm at the head of the others who had gone to take advantage of the Pijiguao, or palm festival. The raiders shot him twice in the back, since he ran toward the refuge of the aldea. He was wounded by one bamboo point, not deeply, and by one point poisoned with curare, which caused a rather deep wound. In the aldea he told the lame
[123] boy to hide himself from the raiders who had killed him, and then, finding no help in the aldea, he ran to our house, about 200 to 300 meters away.

actual marriage practices reflect the immediate political and military needs of a given village. If it is more advantageous to dispose of a woman in a way that promotes greater solidarity between allies, the marriage rule is not followed.[1] An eligible female, therefore, is given to a man (perhaps unrelated) in another village if her kinsmen have reason to believe that they may be required to take refuge in or request military aid from that other village.

An ally's demands are not to be taken lightly, for to fail in an obligation to an ally may have the gravest consequences for survival; one tactic of Yąnomamö warfare is invitations to feasts during which a disgruntled group kills the male guests and seizes their women. These treacherous feasts (nomohoni) occur often enough, so that local groups are always suspicious of their allies. A dependable ally is won at the expense of women. Failure to hand over enough women creates a frustrated ally who is extremely dangerous. Yąnomamö political behavior has largely to do with disposing of enough women to make the ally loyal, but not to give more women than is necessary to achieve this end; miscalculation in this respect has serious consequences. As it is imperative for local groups, for reasons to be outlined below, to have allies, it is likewise necessary for them to enter into marriage exchanges with other groups.

[1] When women are given to men from other villages, the men rarely, if ever, are related to them as FaSiSo or MoBrSo. The exchange of women for purposes of alliance usually establishes the initial kinship ties between the groups of the wife receivers and wife givers.

*621 White's generalization that

> every society tends to behave in such a way as to achieve that balance between size and solidarity that will give it the maximum effectiveness in carrying on its life-sustaining activities. (1959:104)

*621 *628 562 583 582 721 Belligerent ideology and aggressive behavior

Village size plays an important role in the nature of the political relationships between groups that are not linked by kinship ties. As mentioned above, larger villages tend to use their strength and dominance to upset the exchange balance of women. But the degree to which a powerful group is able to force a dependent ally to cede women is limited by the ability of the smaller group to raid the larger village successfully. In ideological terms the Yanomamö express this capacity to wage war by placing emphasis on and valuing aggressive behavior. It is considered both proper and desirable to act ferociously, as this informs neighbors of the group's capacity to wage war and warns them that the group is willing to resort to war in political dealings.

*621 *628 526 574 152 Members of small villages are consequently constrained to behave militantly toward larger neighbors to limit the coercion that the larger group may be tempted to try. Their fierce behavior takes the form of threat, bluff, chicanery in trading and, most important, challenges to duels. Frequently, when villagers are invited to feast with an allied group, the invitation includes a challenge to a chest-pounding

duel. Such a duel functions to remind the allies that the host is strong and willing to display his strength to protect his sovereignty.

The practical effect of this kind of behavior is that the solidarity of political alliances is constantly threatened. Allies are always suspicious of each other's intentions, and political ties between them are tenuous.

Although the giving of women in marriage between allies serves to promote solidarity, the capacity for marriage to achieve this end in itself is limited by the constant displays of hostility and aggressiveness by both groups.

The display of ferocity is manifest at the local, village level also. No insult is too slight to go unnoticed and unchallenged. Indeed, most individuals seize upon these opportunities to display strength. Thus, a legitimate way for men to display aggressiveness is for them to beat their errant wives, to burn them with fire brands, to cut their arms and legs with machetes or to shoot them in a non-vital part of the body with a barbed arrow. Men constantly intimidate their wives and respond cruelly to the slightest provocations, such as the wife's failure to act quickly on a husband's demand for food. Men who are brutal to their wives are feared and respected by other men, for the implication of this behavior is that the man will behave equally fiercely if insulted by another man.

Men often prefer to have a wife from another village, upon whom it is easier--and safer--to vent ferocity and

escalate, the factions involved usually use the interlude between a club-fight and actual killings to establish separate gardens.

Occasionally, however, a village suddenly becomes embroiled in a war that it has not expected, or fighting within the village immediately involves shooting to kill. Then the only recourse for the group is to take refuge with an ally and subsist on the produce of the ally's garden. If the critical situation develops out of an intra-village dispute, the smaller of the contesting factions is forced to flee to another village where it has friends or relatives.

If all the members of a village are forced to take refuge in another village, they proceed to make their own garden apart from that of their hosts; then, when the garden begins to produce, the refugee group moves to that site to live. They do this because the price of protection is always measurable in terms of the hosts' demanding access to the women of the guests, either as spouses for their own men or simply as temporary sexual partners.

Twice during the lifetime of my oldest Bisaasi-tedi informants their group was obliged to flee to an allied village to escape the raids of powerful neighbors, raids that resulted from the development of intensive hostilities before the group could establish a new garden of its own elsewhere. On both occasions the refugees lost a number of women to their protectors, and in neither case did they receive wives in return. Indeed, on the second occasion, the hosts planned

*628 726 • 574 to kill all the male guests and to abduct the women, but the hosts themselves unexpectedly became involved in a war and required the aid of their guests.

*628 24 726 361 Yąnomamö dependency on cultivated foods, then, promotes political alliances with other villages; the warfare pattern is such that the members of a village may have to flee from their site to avoid the raids of their enemies. If they have not had time to establish a new garden, they need the support of an ally until they are able to support themselves.

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121 583 582 The variables that affect Yąnomamö marriage practices are numerous and diverse and combine with each other in complex ways. I shall show in the chapters that follow how these variables actually affect Yąnomamö marriage practices. At this juncture the point to be made is that Yąnomamö social practice in real life can not be completely isomorphic with the stated marriage preferences because the milieu within which marriages take place simply precludes such a neat fit. A functional, rather than a structural analysis seems to be demanded by the nature of the variables in question. I shall also show the degree to which we can predict actual marriage behavior, given specific information about the variables.

[926] [882] Finally, I should add that the Yąnomamö constitute a significant case for ethnological inquiry: this society offers

Karawatari's village.

The raiders attacked the foreigners at dawn but were driven off by gunfire; a number of the Indians were killed, among them a man called Hokohenawë, and some of the foreigners were allegedly hit with arrows. The Indians managed to capture a young girl, taking her back to Karawatari's village on the Shukumöna-u. Shortly after arriving at Karawatari's village, the abductors were in turn raided by another Shamatari village, then on the Upper Mavaca River under the leadership of Matakuwë, one of the two "original" Shamatari men. Karawatari's group had split from Matakuwë's group and was on hostile terms with it. The girl was taken by Matakuwë's men on this raid and brought to the Mavaca River. Matakuwë's village was on a branch of the Mavaca River called Kedebaböwei-u when Nabëyoma was abducted from Karawatari's group. Zerries (1964:14) gives 1934 as the date of the abduction of Nabëyoma, whereas Seitz (1963:21) places it a little earlier.

In Matakuwë's village, Nabëyoma was given to Yoyonahi's son; he shot her with a barbed arrow for disobeying him and the girl fled into the woods to nurse her wound. At this time Matakuwë's group was on friendly terms with the residents of Patanowë-tëka (who are now living in three distinct villages and constitute the groups from whom most of my data were taken). On one of their visits, the residents of Patanowë-tëka found Nabëyoma in the woods outside Matakuwë's village and took her home with them when they left after visiting.

222 in particular seasons; the most important are manaca, seje, moriche and yagua. The hearts as well as the fruits are eaten, and the Indians usually return to trees they have felled to collect the large, fat, white grubs that mature in the decayed pith. In general, a great deal of energy goes into the collection of these palm fruits in proportion to the caloric return and, even during the peak of the wild fruit harvest, the Yąnomamö still depend heavily on their cultivated foods.

224 Two kinds of hunting techniques provide the Yąnomamö with most of their meat; the occasional kills made by their dogs provide the rest. The first, called rama, is the desultory individual hunting that goes on around the villages. These hunts rarely last more than one day. The second kind of hunting, called heniyomou, involves as many as a dozen hunters who set up a temporary camp a day's walk or more away from the village and use it as the base of operations. This kind of hunting may last five days or more and occurs immediately before a feast, as the etiquette of feasting requires that guests be given fresh meat to eat on their way home after the feast.

Game animals most commonly taken include several species of monkeys, two species of wild pig, tapir, armadillo, agouti, anteaters, wild turkeys, and a small alligator-like reptile (babilla, Spanish). Other game animals taken with less enthusiasm and less frequency include deer, turtles, parrots, snakes, capibara, guinea-hens and a large rodent (lapa, Spanish).

000(lapa, Spanish).

222 The collection of small fruits, spiders, ant grubs, wild honey, crabs, mushrooms and fish also contributes variety to the Yąnomamö diet.

24] 262 [46] (177) Cultivated foods contribute the greater proportion of calories to the Yąnomamö diet, probably upwards of 85%, although this figure would vary seasonally. Again, those Yąnomamö villages living close to Makiritare settlements cultivate much more yucca (manioc) than platanos, refining it in some cases to meal as do the Makiritares. Elsewhere [852] the Yąnomamö eat their yucca roasted or boiled or make cassave bread by a technique quite distinct from that employed by the Makiritare.

722 [422] Yąnomamö material culture is very much attenuated by comparison with, for example, Makiritare. The Yąnomamö like to limit their possessions to an amount that is readily transported by the women, because the entire village may be obliged at any given moment to abandon its site to avoid raiders, or may be invited to a feast at another village. [422] [574] They do not like to leave possessions in their village when they leave it, as visitors from other villages would take them. And, their warfare pattern precludes the possibility of leaving a few people behind to guard the village, as they [361] would be easily overwhelmed by a raiding party. When just a portion of the village leaves to visit another group, those that stay behind move into the jungle some distance from the village and live in well-concealed huts until their co-

722 361 villagers return from their visit, returning only to fetch food from the garden. When the men are away on a raid, the women and children are concealed in these temporary sites 22 361 until the men return. During the dry season when raiding and 574 722 feasting are common, villages are frequently deserted; the men are away on a raid and the women and children are hiding in the jungle, or the entire village has gone off to participate in a feast at another village. This pattern has rather unfortunately been described as nomadism, or semi-nomadism, by a number of students of Yąnomamö culture. I wish to emphasize that the Yąnomamö population movements, annually or over a longer period of time, are almost exclusively a function of their warfare pattern and not economic considerations, as is implied in the use of the terms nomadism and semi-nomadism.

422 484 All males above 13 or 14 years of age have a bow, [411] arrows, a bamboo case for carrying extra arrow tips, a fire [415] drill, and several 'knives' made from the incisors of the [372] agouti rodent. Both sexes have either a cotton or a vine [237] hammock. These possessions are easily carried by the owner [352] on long trips and are rapidly packed. Whenever I wanted to [123] accompany a group of people on trips to other villages they always complained about how much of a burden I would be. It always took me several hours to prepare my packs, and I always took more than I could comfortably carry myself, having 484 to hire some of them to assist me. They, on the contrary, could be ready to depart within ten minutes of their decision to leave, having only to roll up their hammocks and pack a few

622 influence within the village. A leader's functions are few and ill-defined. Generally, he initiates activities that the entire group has already decided to undertake. His major [101] function and concern is with organizing and leading raiding parties and with investigating the village neighborhood when raiders are likely to be present, a dangerous and undesirable task. Moreover, he represents the village and frequently [529] [574] [439] initiates feasts to honor other villages, and he often supervises the trading that normally follows a feast, permitting enough possessions to pass into the hands of the guests to assuage their greed, while at the same time ensuring that his followers are not impoverished. Because of his role in [529] [241] initiating feasts, his garden is usually larger than that of his followers and he produces the greater portion of food given away during the feast. During club-fights within the [578] [621] [629] village, the leaders of the factions involved in the fighting stand by and attempt to keep the fighting innocuous, using both diplomacy and threats to effect a relatively peaceful end to the fighting. When diplomacy fails and someone is badly injured or killed in the fighting, the headmen are the first to start firing arrows at the offenders.

622 The headman's role as leader is enhanced in proportion 92 to the intensity of warfare. Some headmen deliberately seek 554 to prolong wars by spurning offers of peace from their enemies, or go so far as to initiate new raids against some unsuspecting village on the pretext that they are practicing harmful magic against his followers, or simply to abduct women.

10:Chagnon E-4.5 (1964-1966) 1987 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

of the sex ratio, and the distribution of the women among them.

In Chapter 5 I will show how the two Shamatari villages, Reyabobŏwei-tedi and Mŏmaribŏwei-tedi, participated in a treacherous feast during which they killed a number of their kinsmen from Mŏwărаoba-tedi. This feast committed the two Shamatari villages to an alliance with the Bisaasi-tedi and Monou-tedi in which the latter two villages were, in a political-military sense, less dependent on the support of the Shamatari than the Shamatari were on them. The Mŏmaribŏwei-tedi and the Reyabobŏwei-tedi represented the front of the Shamatari expansion into the unoccupied Mavaca River area. The territory they abandoned as they expanded to the west was subsequently occupied by other Shamatari villages, the members of which were historically related to them.[1] By participating in the treacherous feast and becoming enemies to their congeners, the two Shamatari villages subordinated themselves to the interests of the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi. Since they formed a buffer between the villages of Bisaasi-tedi and Monou-tedi on the one hand, and the Shamatari village of Mŏwărаoba-tedi on the other, they bore the brunt of the raids mounted by the latter in revenge for the treachery. In short, they had only two dependable allies, the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi. Their dependence on these allies was transformed into an im-

[1] See Chapter 5, "The History of Paruritawă-tedi."

595 in the family. The transfer of the woman from the older to
513 the younger brother was, in some of the cases, quite gradual. Thus, Kaobawä gave Hantoami to his younger brother, Shadadama, because his other two wives complained about not having enough game to eat. Kaobawä continued to have sexual relationships with Hantoami after she had become Shadadama's wife, and sired two of her children.

*629 Another form of permitted affair is called nohimou--
722 "to befriend" or "act like a friend" to a woman. This type
836 of relationship might occur, for example, when the members
837 of a village have to take refuge with an ally. The allies invariably enter into nohimou relationships with the women of the refugees. The refugees are reluctant to give their women as wives to the men of the host village, but they are obliged to permit them to have sexual access to the women. These kinds of affairs also develop within a village between a man and the wife of a friend, or, with single girls. Again,
*629 when men go on visits to other villages and bring trade goods,
504 they frequently are permitted to have affairs with the hosts'
438 women, particularly if the men have brought goods that are
837 highly prized by the hosts.
836

835 Incestuous affairs between classificatory siblings are quite common.[1] One of my female informants used husband

[1]Incest, to the (male ego) Yanomamö, is any sexual relationship with a member of one's lineage or with mother, mother's sister, mother's mother, and mother's sister's daughter. Failure to avoid a woman of the mother-in-law category is also incestuous in the eyes of the Yanomamö, but only if the woman is sexually active. Menopausal women of

avoid the raids from the PatanowÃ-tedi, the man in question used this opportunity to have an affair with KonoreiwÃ's wife, presuming that he would not be discovered because the village was filled with people. He was discovered, despite his discretion, and challenged to a duel by KonoreiwÃ. The entire village participated in the club fight. KonoreiwÃ punished his wife by hitting her in the mouth with a glowing fire brand, severely burning her lips.

Finally, and most drastically, the woman shortage is remedied by raiding other villages to abduct women. This, however, is war. The ever-present possibility of this occurring, however, is a constant threat to the stability of political alliances, for allies occasionally turn on each other with the intent of seizing females. It is largely for this reason that allies cede women to each other peacefully by contracting marriage alliances. In November 1964 the PatanowÃ-tedi arrived at Bisaasi-tedi to participate in a feast. This was the first time the groups had gathered as groups since they separated from each other on hostile terms in ca. 1944. They intended to make peace at this feast, but a party of men from Monou-tedi, a village that also formed part of the group before the 1944 split, arrived uninvited and abducted seven women from the PatanowÃ-tedi. This ultimately provoked a war between the PatanowÃ-tedi and Monou-tedi, and determined the settlement pattern of both groups, as well as their political activities, all during my field work. The war was still being actively prosecuted when I

the Namowei-tedi and the Boreta-tedi (Chapter V) developed out of a case such as this.

When women are given to men in allied villages, the local descent group of the girl (her father and adult brothers and, to a lesser extent, the girl's more distant agnates) decides which patrilineage of the foreign village should have her. Smaller villages are more prone to enter into alliances based on marriage exchanges than are larger villages, since smaller villages require allies to a greater extent than larger ones.[1] Local descent groups in small villages are more cohesive than descent groups in larger villages because they usually comprise a man and his adult sons; if there are distantly related agnates in small villages, these are incorporated into the local descent group. In small villages, therefore, local descent groups are more corporate because all the adult agnates of the girl have a say in her marriage. Ideally, they give the girl to a member of the politically strongest descent group of the allied village, for this group is the one from which aid will come or, conversely, the one most likely to make the decision to initiate hostilities against the smaller village.

The longer an alliance endures, the more likely it is that the exchange of women balances. The two largest

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[1] Larger Yanomamö villages can make visiting alliances with other groups that do not lead to marriage exchanges, as it is relatively unimportant to them to stabilize such alliances by ceding women to militarily inferior groups.

609 groups of Yąnomamö have begun referring to the entire tribe
601 as "Los Shori." The Yąnomamö address the missionaries with
799 this term hoping to maximize their chances of obtaining
[609] desirable manufactured goods such as machetes and axes.
[601]

607 Men who are not related by blood constantly remind
521 each other of obligations when they use this kinship term.
601 A brother-in-law deserves respect, fair treatment, and gratitude. As the term is reciprocal, a conversation between two shoriwë is punctuated frequently by these constant reminders that each owes the other goods, services and respect by virtue of the fact that they stand in wife-giver/wife-receiver relationship to each other. Such conversations, usually about material goods or women, strike the outsider as something of verbal contests to determine which of the two speakers is more of a shoriwë than the other, i.e., who owes the other more goods, services, gratitude and generosity. One who has actually given a sister to the other's group has an advantage, in a trading sense, as he can more legitimately claim goods from the wife receiver.

*628 When men visit the village of an ally to beg, trade or
• 574 participate in feasts, they call all non-related men of that
609 village 'brother-in-law,' emphasizing the fact that they
601 stand in wife-giver relationship to them, and deserve, therefore, the generosity of the hosts.
583

*628 Alliances between villages involve, in addition to
527 military aid, mutual feasting and trading. It must be
574 remembered that alliances, no matter how many marriage ex-
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581

changes bind the villages to each other, are weak and unstable. The more frequently allies visit and feast with each other, the less likely treachery will take place, as a certain amount of trust and friendship is generated by visiting and feasting.

The tendency for Yąnomamɜ villages to create artificial shortages of certain manufactured items is related to feasting and the creation of organic solidarity of a sort. After Yąnomamɜ villages enter into alliances, they tend to adjust their economic production of such items as bows, arrow cane, spun cotton, tobacco, baskets, cultivated drugs, dogs and clay cooking pots. Any village is capable of producing all of these goods, but allied villages create shortages of some of these items so that they can become dependent on the productivity of their allies, thereby having excuses to visit and trade.

One of the most significant relationship in trading between villages is the shoriwɨ tie, and these men trade with each other whenever they visit. As a trade frequently involves feasting, the specialization in production of specific items leads to greater solidarity between allied villages. Although it would be an error simply to identify the role of shoriwɨ with that of trading partner, this aspect of the shoriwɨ tie, particularly between men of different villages, is by no means negligible in accounting for the solidarity this relationship promotes in inter-village political ties.

The way the trading is conducted also contributes to

inter-village visiting and solidarity, for one trade is usually the prelude to another. For example, the Bisaasi-tedi obtain much of their spun cotton and curare arrow points from their Shamatari allies. It takes considerable time and labor to accumulate these items. When the Shamatari are visited by the Bisaasi-tedi, the latter make known their desire to have these items, and their hosts promise to produce them. When the items are accumulated, the Shamatari visit the Bisaasi-tedi to inform them their cotton and arrow points are ready. A feast is arranged and the items are given over to the Bisaasi-tedi after the celebration terminates. The Shamatari then request specific items from their hosts, and the cycle continues. Neither village is completely 'paid up' regarding goods it owes to the other, so that each exchange as Mauss (1954) argued, brings forth another.[1] The imporant point is that Yąnomamö trading is not stimulated by naturally occuring shortages or monopolies on resources; artificial shortages are <u>created</u> and these promote visiting between allies. In Durkheimian terms, the division of labor, irrespective of the causes, promotes organic solidarity between allied villages. And, the kinship category most intimately involved in the trading is the brother-in-law.

000 Affinal ties between villages, therefore, owe their

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[1] The parallel between this and bride price payment in Burma is striking. See Leach, 1957. It is worth noting at this point that the Yąnomamö have no word for 'free' or 'gift'; the closest they can come to it is: "something given without cause." But nothing is given without cause, and they shrewdly keep track of all debts.

full brothers and constitute a local descent group by virtue of their co-residence.

The relationship of age differential between agnates and the strength of the agnatic tie can be illustrated by Kaobawä's relationships to the men in his descent group. Two of them are much young than he (Shadadama, 22; Shararaiwä, 18). Whenever Kaobawä organizes a feast, these two young men do much of the laborious work of preparing the food and cooking it, going on the 5-7 day hunt to obtain the meat, and making the bark trough to contain the cooked food. Another agnate, Wadesiwä, 45 years old, does nothing to assist in the preparations for feasts. He is about 5 years older than Kaobawä. The two remaining agnates, Rapeawä, 45, and Shiimima, 28, each participate to a very limited degree in the work. Shiimima, the younger of these two, does more work than the other, and usually takes charge of the hunting and directs the labors of the two youngest men in preparing the food. The two youngest agnates, however, do more work than all of the older ones put together. They, in turn, do even less work than Kaobawä's adopted son, a Shamatari boy of 16 years. A great deal of the work is done by Kaobawä's nephew, Bäkotawä, 18 years old.

Kaobawä's ability to command his agnates to execute tasks varies inversely with the ages of these men. Once Shiimima took my flashlight. I discovered by devious means who the culprit was, and asked Kaobawä to have Shiimima return it to me, presuming that he could order him to do so.

622 Several days went by and I still did not have the item, so I
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613 asked Kaobawä what he had done about it. He said he had
561 spoken to Shiimima, but the matter then rested with him: "He
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554 will give it to you if it is his desire to do so." I ulti-
571 mately had to resort to my own means to recover the flash-
light, as Kaobawä could not force Shiimima to return it.
When I questioned Kaobawä about this ineffectiveness, he
explained: "Shiimima is already fierce and I can not order
him around." Thus, while he could command his youngest
siblings to do things, he had to rely on example and suggestion
629 to get older agnates to do the same things. Before every
613 feast, for example, the village clearing is cleaned by scrap-
602
529 ing up the weeds and debris that accumulate, and hauling them
• 594 out of the village. As the younger agnates are busy prepar-
351
554 ing the food for the feast, they can not clean the clearing.
591 Kaobawä usually goes to the center of the village and begins
561 cleaning up the debris himself. After a while, his older
agnates join him, and perhaps their spouses as well. They
would be inclined, however, to refuse to do the work if
Kaobawä requested them to do it, for acquiescence in this
regard implies that one is being bossed around.

*621 Within a local descent group, therefore, the relative
613 age of the agnates is crucial to the solidarity of the group
602
561 and the effectiveness of its leadership. If the father of
593 a group of brothers is alive, he will be the leader, and the
602
613 group functions quite smoothly. When he dies, however, the
solidarity and strength of the group diminishes, as adult

000 never took place.

*621 *623 156 152 One of the functions served by the levels of violence in Yąnomamö fighting is that the Yąnomamö are able to exhibit their ferocity in relatively benign forms and thereby live up to their claims of fierceness. But, since any form of violence can escalate to a more serious form of fighting, the system of violence itself constitutes a strain on the solidarity of relationships between and within villages.

*628 527 574 578 152 156 One peculair feature of this syndrome of fierceness is that smaller villages tend to be the most aggressive in their dealings with outsiders and with allies. The reason seems to be that smaller villages are more compelled to display their tenacity, as they are more obviously the weaker members in alliances. The expression of violence by members of allied villages, ironically enough, takes place during feasts. Thus, grievances that may have developed between members of allied villages since they last feasted together are satisfied during the course of the next feast. Thus, during the situations most likely to promote solidarity, allies frequently display their capacity to fight, informing their allies that they are sovereign, friendly, but fierce. The form of violence associated with feasting is usually chest pounding, but if someone is injured, the duel may escalate to side-slapping with the flat side of a machete. It smacks of the ridiculous to witness groups of men beating each other violently in such duels, and shortly thereafter embrace each other around the neck and chant, each man

promising the other to be a faithful friend, to give goods, and to provide the other with women.

Thus, canons of political behavior and the high value placed on ferocity have the effect of creating a considerable amount of tension both within and between villages. In short, Yanomamö philosophy regarding ferocity and the associated behavior reduces internal village solidarity and weakens political alliances between villages. Indirectly, it promotes village splitting and warfare.

that Lower Bisaasi-tedi approximates a dual organization of two intermarrying lineages, Sha and Tom.

There are two senses in which Lower Bisaasi-tedi is not representative of the typical Yąnomamö village: the sex ratio is nearly 1.0, i.e., there are about as many females as there are males in the village, and the group is politically stable and cohesive; not a single fight took place within this group during the 15 months of my field work. The sex ratio is explainable by several factors. First, the members of this village have been particularly successful in forcing their Shamatari allies to cede women to them while at the same time have managed to avoid reciprocating the exchanges. Secondly, a large Shamatari family from Mąmariböwei-tedi recently took refuge in the village, a family that comprises two males and four females. Finally, many of the men killed in the 1950-51 treacherous feast were from this faction of Bisaasi-tedi.

The solidarity of Lower Bisaasi-tedi stems from a number of factors. First, all adult men are married. More importantly, the core lineages (Sha and Tom) are linked to each other in three generations by marriage ties, and the leader of this village, Reromawä, has astutely manipulated

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logy.) The Tom lineage is the dominant political group in a number of villages north of the Orinoco River in the vicinity of Maata-u (see Map B, Chapter II). These villages trace their origins back to a single group (indicated as Husirawä-urihi-tedi on Map C, Chapter V) to which the members of Namowei-tedi were allied about 1900. All living members of the Tom lineage found today among the Namowei-tedi are in Bisaasi-tedi's lower village, where they constitute a major political bloc in the affairs of that group.

*621 members of his own village, Hasabŏwë-tedi, who killed his
613 father. Reromawë's group was then actively raiding Hasabŏwë-
602 tedi. The man was given a wife in Reromawë's village, the
562 widow of a Tom man killed in the 1950-51 treacherous feast.
582 The man's two daughters are married to Sha men.[1] The last
583 man and his family joined Reromawë's group in 1965 to take refuge from his own villagers, the Mŏmaribŏwei-tedi, some of whom wanted to take his wives away from him for being brutal. He had previously given a daughter to a Tom man and when he was forced to flee from his own village, took refuge with his son-in-law. Appendix A gives more details on each individual discussed above.

*628 Lower Bisaasi-tedi has political ties with a number
582 of villages. It has recently (since 1960) entered into al-
583 liance with two Shamatari villages, Moyabŏbŏwei-tedi and Mŏmaribŏwei-tedi, and has managed to obtain a number of women from the latter village as wives for young bachelors
*628 in the group. The Mŏmaribŏwei-tedi visit them frequently to
527 feast and trade, and the members of Lower Bisaasi-tedi
• 574 reciprocate the visits. The ties between Lower Bisaasi-tedi
438 and the Mŏmaribŏwei-tedi are nearly as strong as the ties
602 between Lower Bisaasi-tedi and any of its cognate villages to whose members the Lower Bisaasi-tedi are agnatically re-
*628 lated. Of the villages that are cognate to Lower Bisaasi-tedi,
602 Monou-tedi is perhaps the most dependable ally, because the

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[1] Reromawë's actual son, and Reromawë's classificatory son in Upper Bisaasi-tedi.

[Namowei-tedi Group]

The headman of Wareta-tedi, Shamaiyowë, and some of his kinsmen went to visit their allies on the latter's invitation, but Nusirawë's group treacherously killed Shamaiyowë and two of his followers. Not wanting to participate in the raiding against their old allies, the Namowei-tedi established a new garden and moved away from the Wareta-tedi. A number of individuals in the present populations of Patanowë-tedi and Bisaasi-tedi trace descent back to the headman of Wareta-tedi, as the latter had demanded women in return for his protection. In ca. 1910 the Namowei-tedi moved to their new garden at Namowei.

Area 3: Namowei-tedi

This area is quite mountanous and the group took its name from one of the ranges, Namowei-kikë--"sharpness." They lived here long enough to make three different gardens (Makei, Shodemi, and Amatakë), but ultimately were forced to abandon the area because of renewed raiding from their old enemies, the Boreta-tedi. Having no friends to the north and several old enemies to the east, the Namowei-tedi moved west and established their garden at Hahoyaoba-tëka in ca. 1920.

Area 4: Hahoyaoba-tedi

The old allies of the Namowei-tedi, the Wareta-tedi, were forced to abandon their site and move west. They settled in the area immediately south of the Namowei-tedi, splitting into two villages (Hasabëwë-tedi and Ashadowë-tedi), and continued to remain on good terms with the Namowei-tedi.

and returned to Patanowë-tëka. A segment of the group that returned to Patanowë-tëka immediately began making a new garden (Shjhota) about a day's walk to the west of Patanowë-tëka, anticipating that further hostilities with the Wanidima group would develop. Within a year of the club fight the Wanidima group attacked the group at Patanowë-tëka while the latter were having a feast, but the raiders' arrows missed their marks and no one was injured. The group at Patanowë-tëka abandoned their village and rejoined their agnates at the latter's new garden, Shjhota-tëka, whence they began raiding the Wanidima-tedi. On one raid the group from Shjhota found Wanidima-tedi deserted and followed the trail the villagers had taken. The Wanidima-tedi were found at Hasaböwë-tedi, feasting. The raiders killed one of the Wanidima-tedi men, but in doing so angered both the Hasaböwë-tedi and their cognate group, the Ashadowë-tedi.

With the aid of the last two villages, the Wanidima-tedi raided the Shjhota-tedi and killed a younger brother of Makuwë. The Shjhota-tedi reciprocated by raiding the Wanidima-tedi, killing Husiwë (Nabëyoma's husband), Hoari, and Siayeikema. This in turn was followed by raids from the Wanidima-tedi in which the Shjhota-tedi lost Ushuenawë and the two younger brothers of Paruriwë, and had one of their women, Buhiomi, seized.

Eventually the superior numbers of the Wanidima-tedi and their allies decided the fighting, and the Shjhota-tedi were forced to abandon their garden and make a new one elsewhere.

[Mamowei-tedi Group]

Kreibŏwei population was in need of an ally to aid them in their raids against Patanowĕ-tedi. Shortly after they moved to Kreibŏwei they made friendly contact with a Shamatari village, then under the leadership of Riakowĕ, located on the Mavaca River. The Kreibŏwei-tedi began visiting Riakowĕ's village and entered into feasting relationships with his followers.

Riakowĕ's followers were related to the Shamatari with whom the Kreibŏwei-tedi were at war: Sibarariwĕ's village. Sibarariwĕ persuaded Riakowĕ to invite the Kreibŏwei-tedi to a feast during which the two Shamatari groups planned to kill as many men as they could and abduct women. By doing this Sibarariwĕ would avenge the murder of his older brother, Ruwahiwĕ, who was treacherously killed about 10 years earlier by the Kreibŏwei-tedi, when the latter lived at Patanowĕ-tĕka.

The Kreibŏwei-tedi accepted the feast invitation and went to Riakowĕ's village in the dry season (i.e., December through March) of 1950-51. Sibarariwĕ's followers, along with a party of men from Hasabŏwĕ-tedi, were concealed in the jungle outside Riakowĕ's village. Shortly after arriving at the village, the Kreibŏwei-tedi men were attacked by Riakowĕ's men with sharpened staves and axes, and eleven of them were killed. Those that managed to break out of the palisades were shot from ambush by Sibarariwĕ's followers, along with the Hasabŏwĕ-tedi, resulting in the wounding of a large number of Kreibŏwei-tedi men. Only six or seven women were seized by the Shamatari; but, the greediness of the Shamatari

[Namowei-tedi Group]

000 174 175 628 523 574 582 726 [621]

mouth of the Mavaca River. The Paruritawä-tedi had split from Sibarariwä's village about 1945, and had not been involved in the treacherous feast of 1950 in which the Kreiböwei-tedi lost so many men. The Paruritawä-tedi were still on good terms with Sibarariwä's followers, and the members of Monou-tedi and Bisaasi-tedi persuaded them to invite Sibarariwä and his group to a feast. Using their agnatic ties and existing friendship, the Paruritawä-tedi succeeded in getting the followers of Sibarariwä to accept the invitation, but a malaria epidemic prevented all but a handful of people from actually attending the feast: five men and four women. With the assistance of the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi, the Paruritawä-tedi killed three of the guests and seized all four of the women.

628 583

By participating in this treachery, the Paruritawä-tedi subordinated themselves to the Bisaasi-tedi and Monou-tedi. At the present time the Paruritawä-tedi live in two villages, and are intimately involved in a bride-exchange network with the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi, the latter two villages receiving more women (and men doing bride service) than they give. The Paruritawä-tedi have no other allies, as they are the front of the expansion into this region and the only villages to their east are allies of Sibarariwä. Despite the fact that they would like to make friendly contact with Sibarariwä's group again, the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi, as we shall see, prevent them from doing so by chicane and threat. Thus, Monou-tedi and the

[Paruritawä-tedi Group]

others. Matakuwë's group was being raided by Kayabawë's followers and by the splinter group that separated from Aramamisi-kähö. These raids forced Matakuwë and his followers to abandon Aramamisi-kähö and settle at Shirakoböwei. This move took place about 1900, perhaps a few years later.

Area 2: Shirakoböwei

Matakuwë's followers established several sites in this area, as they were harried by the raids from Kayabawë's followers. An internal village feud developed between the factions led respectively by Karehewë and Orakawë. During the fighting a young man from Karehewë's group was killed with a spear, and Karehewi moved to the Mavaca basin. Karehewë's followers raided the group at Shirakoböwei, and the latter reciprocated, forcing Karehewë to move further north. Karehewë's son, Riakowë, became headman of this village and played host to the 1950 treacherous feast in which the Kreiböwei-tedi lost a large number of men. This village is presently called Iwahikoroba-tedi, and is led by Riakowë's son, Börösöwë. In 1965 rumors reached the Bisaasi-tedi that Iwahikoroba-tedi had split into two factions, both moving down the Mavaca River. In September 1965 I attempted unsuccessfully to make the first contact with this group, but my guides forced me to turn back when we began seeing signs (bridges and trails) made by Börösöwë's group. They feared Börösöwë would kill us.

Another faction, led by Waiyahowë, split off from

000 rarily abandoning Konabuma. [Paruritawä-tedi Group]

174 Matakuwë's group had three factions. Oroshowë, a
195 man belonging to Matakuwë's faction, took a woman away from
*621 her husband, a man from Karawatari's faction, leading to an
578 internal feud. One man of Karawatari's faction was shot, and
361 Karawatari split from the main group to establish a village of his own on the Shukumöna-u River. This split took place
174 about 1925. Karawatari's group began raiding Matakuwë's vil-
175
*621 lage to avenge the death of Biawawë, the man killed in the
882 feud. Karawatari's village later split for reasons I was un-
174 able to determine, and two factions separated from Karawatari's
195
*621 group to found their own villages: Warabawë-tedi, led by
361 Kewariwë, and Kohoroshi-tedi, led by Ohiriwë. These last two
[622] villages are presumed to be in Brazil at the present time,
[749] as my informants assert that Kohoroshi-tedi includes bearded foreigners among its members, most probably Salesian Missionaries on the Cauabury River.[1] In 1964 Karawatari's group
361
• [574] lived on the Shukumöna-u River, as men from Reyaboböwei-tedi
*[628] danced there that year. When the Reyaboböwei-tedi left
[721] Karawatari's village, they took a young woman (Dimorama) with them, thereby becoming enemies to Karawatari. The girl presently lives in Bisaasi-tedi.

174 In about 1935 Matakuwë and his group moved to Kayurewë
361 to avoid raids from Karawatari and the Aramamisi-tedi.
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*[628] [1]Warabawë-tedi, a part of Kohoroshi-tedi in 1934, and Karawatari's villagers were involved in the abduction of Nabëyoma.

and move to Kakamoba. This site was occupied for just a few years, and by 1950 Sibarariwɨ's group was living at Amąrokobŏ-wei: the 1950 treacherous feast for the Kreibŏwei-tedi was conducted while Sibarariwɨ's group was here. After 1950 Sibarariwɨ's group fled south to avoid the raids of the survivors of that treacherous feast, establishing the garden of Dądamobŏwei. This garden was abandoned because of raids mounted by the Paruritawɨ-tedi, and Sibarariwɨ returned to Amąrokobŏwei about 1955. The Paruritawɨ-tedi eventually became friendly to Sibarariwɨ's group and were able to lure some of them, at the instigation of the Monou-tedi and Bisaasi-tedi, to a treacherous feast in 1960, during which three men were murdered and four women captured. In 1964 Sibarariwɨ's group moved to the headwaters of the Mavaca River, being known as the Mŏwɨraoba-tedi. Monou-tedi and Mąmaribŏwei-tedi sent a raiding party against them at this location about the time I started my field work, and killed one man.

Area 6: Paruritawɨ-tedi

The Paruritawɨ-tedi made friendly contact with the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi about 1960, and have entered into alliance with these groups. The Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi persuaded the Paruritawɨ-tedi to invite members of Sibarariwɨ's group to a feast in 1960 and, with the aid of the Paruritawɨ-tedi, murdered three men and seized four women. Sibarariwɨ's group avenged this by mounting raids

[Paruritawä-tedi Group]

against the Paruritawä-tedi, and the latter abandoned their site and moved north. When they abandoned Paruritawä-tedi, the group split into two factions, each making a separate garden: Mõmaribõwei and Reyabobõwei. The two factions are still on friendly terms with each other and both are allied to the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi. The Reyabobõwei-tedi are presently attempting rapprochement with Sibarariwä's group, and are being forced by their allies, the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi, to use their newly established friendship to effect another treacherous feast. In February 1965 the Reyabobõwei-tedi succeeded in inviting Sibarariwä's entire village to a feast and were intending to trick them after they arrived. However, one of the individuals met Sibarariwä's group half-way and warned them of the treachery, frustrating the attempt by the Bisaasi-tedi, the Monou-tedi, and the Paruritawä-tedi to get their revenge on Sibarariwä's group.

C. The War Pattern From November 1964 to February 1966

The effects of raiding and internal feuds on village composition, stability, splitting, and relocation that I have described above may also be observed among these villages at the present time. Raiding was intense during my field work. Patanowä-tedi, for example, was raided at least 25 times while I was in the field, raids that were mounted by a dozen different villages. Not all the raids were successful, but the frequency of the raiding was so high that it was never safe for the Patanowä-tedi to venture away from the village.

721 The major effect of these raids, apart from the ten lives
722 they claimed, was that the Patanowã-tedi had to move fre-
361 quently from one site to another. The Monou-tedi, who were raiding the Patanowã-tedi, were being raided intensively also. They, too, had to move frequently to avoid the raids. Both
*[628] groups had to rely on allies to give them refuge during the
[392] dry season, the time of the year when raiding is most intense.
[221] It will be apparent below how crucial allies are to villages
[241] that are being raided frequently, and how agricultural
726 practices necessitate these allies. Finally, the events
602 discussed below will illustrate the degree to which consan-
*628 guineal ties between mutually hostile villages are able to mitigate the hostilities between these villages.

*628 The war between Monou-tedi and Patanowã-tedi

726 After the Namowei-tedi group split at the site of
*[621] Patanowã in the early '40s, the two factions entered into a
[361] period of hostility that lasted until one of the factions, the present groups of Bisaasi-tedi and Monou-tedi, moved out of the area. Raiding between the two factions ceased after 1950, and each group entered into political alliances with unrelated neighboring villages.

728 In the middle '50s, a rapprochement between the two
* 574 factions was attempted. A few individuals from Monou-tedi
*628 began visiting Patanowã-tedi, and one of them, Torokoiwã, was
[58] given two wives by the Patanowã-tedi. The rapprochement, how-
[583] ever, was never effected and the political relationships between

Patanowë-tedi and her two colonies, Monou-tedi and Bisaasi-tedi, were generally of a suspicious nature; only a few individuals trusted the members of the other group enough to visit their village.

By 1964 the Patanowë-tedi had become involved in a particularly vicious war with a number of neighboring villages, and were badly in need of military assistance. Their only allies were the Ashadowë-tedi, a large group living two days' walk south of them. Consequently, the Patanowë-tedi informed the Bisaasi-tedi that they were willing to make peace with them. The Bisaasi-tedi extended a feast invitation to the Patanowë-tedi to demonstrate their interest in making peace and, in late November 1964 the entire village of Patanowë-tedi arrived at Bisaasi-tedi to participate in the feast. This marked the first time since 1940 that the two groups as groups visited each other.

The Monou-tedi were not involved in the feast, but a number of men from that village came to Bisaasi-tedi intending to abduct Patanowë-tedi women. They succeeded in capturing seven women the day that the Patanowë-tedi arrived, and took them back to Monou-tedi without being discovered. The Patanowë-tedi men, enraged at the loss of seven women, sent a party of men to Monou-tedi the following morning to recover the women. The Patanowë-tedi men entered Monou-tedi and forcibly took five of the seven women away from their captors. The Patanowë-tedi retreated before actual shooting broke out and returned to Bisaasi-tedi. The Monou-tedi were furious

over the loss of the five women, and Yąnomamö canons of ferocity dictated that this loss would have to be avenged. The Monou-tedi informed the Patanowë-tedi that they were going to shoot them on sight the next time they met.

After the Patanowë-tedi returned to Bisaasi-tedi they packed their possessions and left for home. The feast was cancelled, as the Patanowë-tedi feared being ambushed by a Monou-tedi raiding party if they remained at Bisaasi-tedi. Before departing, the Patanowë-tedi assured their hosts that they still wanted peace with them, no matter what the Monou-tedi eventually did.

This illustrates dramatically the Yąnomamö political philosophy that it is legitimate to take advantage of a weak village. The Monou-tedi, knowing that the Patanowë-tedi were politically in need of allies, took advantage of this situation when they abducted the women. They also knew that the Bisaasi-tedi would not take Patanowë-tedi's side in the dispute that was bound to follow, as too many of the Bisaasi-tedi had personal grudges against the Patanowë-tedi. The Monou-tedi also knew that the Patanowë-tedi were not likely to begin a war over this incident, as they already had more enemies than they could successfully withstand without allies. In short, the Monou-tedi knew that they stood a good chance of gaining women by abducting them from the Patanowë-tedi without great risk of being shot by the latter. As the conclusion shows, they managed to obtain two women and did not get into a shooting war with the Patanowë-tedi. However, their anger at

726 *621 622 602 There were, however, two recognizable factions within this group; one was led by Kaobäwä, who had many relatives in both Patanowä-tedi and Monou-tedi, and the other was led by Paruriwä, who had no consanguineal relatives in Patanowä-tedi, but many in Monou-tedi. Paruriwä's group was linked to Kaobäwä's by a number of marriage ties.

*621 622 Kaobäwä was the acknowledged leader of the entire upper section of Bisaasi-tedi, including Paruriwä's group, although Paruriwä had some influence in the affairs of the village. After the middle of the year, Paruriwä began to emerge as leader in his own right, and began duplicating many of the activities normally the prerogative of the village headman. Thus, when Kaobäwä initiated a feast for members [527] [574] of an allied village, Paruriwä duplicated his efforts by sending out his own hunters to provide meat for the guests, and furnished an equal amount of cultivated food, which he disposed of from his own section of the village. Normally, the headman sends out the hunters and disposes of the cultivated food from his own house. Paruriwä, by duplicating Kaobäwä's efforts in these activities, announced that he was a headman.

726 622 *628 [728] The emergence of Paruriwä as an important leader was largely the result of his active prosecution of the war against the Patanowä-tedi. Kaobäwä, after he led one revenge raid against the Patanowä-tedi, decided that he wanted to remain neutral in the fighting and wanted to make peace with the Patanowä-tedi. This led to a political vacuum within

726 628 622 [564] Bisaasi-tedi, as the Monou-tedi were demanding military aid from them. Paruriwë seized upon this as his opportunity to advance his prestige, and after the middle of 1965 initiated several raids against the Patanowë-tedi without the support of Kpobëwë. This enhanced his prestige with the Monou-tedi. [608] As Paruriwë was not related to the slain Monou-tedi headman (consanguineally), his participation in the war is best seen as an expression of his attempt to advance his status.

156 622 [123] [393] Paruriwë's behavior in other respects changed after the middle of the year. He constantly reminded me that he was a 'big man,' as if I would fail to notice this. Again, he went out of his way to be brutal to his wives; on one occasion he nearly killed one of them with an axe because she responded slowly to his demand for food while Paruriwë was entertaining visitors. His outburst was a display to the visitors, and to his own followers, that he was indeed a force to contend with. Shortly after I left the field, #621 622 361 529 574 Paruriwë and his group separated from Kpobëwë's and moved across the Orinoco River. He had started building his house on that side of the river about the middle of the year. This move underscored his postion as a headman, as he could initiate feasts for other groups from his own village. Up until the time he moved, visitors from other villages consistently sought out Kpobëwë as Bisaasi-tedi's headman during the feasts and the trading after the feasts, no matter how much effort Paruriwë spent in emphasizing his own role in the feast. As far as the visitors were concerned, there was just

one real headman, KąobËwË. Thus, ParuriwË had to separate from KąobËwË's group to achieve a status equal to that of KąobËwË.

In July 1965 KąobËwË sent his brother-in-law, KumamawË, to Patanowë-tedi to inform them that his group did not intend to raid the Patanowë-tedi in the future. When KumamawË returned to Bisaasi-tedi, he brought two older people with him, demonstrating that the Patanowë-tedi trusted KąobËwË and were anxious to promote good relations with his group. The older couple brought the message that three young men from Patanowë-tedi were coming on a visit soon. Three days later the young men, NąrokoiwË, NasiwË, and KoiyeiwË, arrived. ParuriwË's group was visiting the Widokaiya-tedi, and when word reached him that a delegation of Patanowë-tedi had arrived at Bisaasi-tedi to visit KąobËwË, he and a group of men from Monou-tedi immediately returned to Bisaasi-tedi, intending to murder the three visitors. KąobËwË, however, warned ParuriwË and the Monou-tedi that should they attempt to harm the visitors, he and his followers would defend them with force. A crisis developed out of this situation, and for a whole day ParuriwË and his Monou-tedi supporters debated the wisdom of their plan. Finally, ParuriwË decided to desist from the murders and even participated in a news chant with one of the Patanowë-tedi--the father of his youngest wife. This emphasized KąobËwË's influence as a leader, and ParuriwË decided to move away from KąobËwË's group after this incident. The Monou-tedi who were to participate in the murder of the three

visitors were enraged because Paruriwä failed to execute the plan, and they returned to Monou-tedi to recruit a raiding party, hoping to intercept the visitors on their way back to Patanowä-tedi.[1] Paruriwä placated the Monou-tedi by organizing a series of raids against the Patanowä-tedi, and by inviting the Monou-tedi to stay in his section of the village when they fled from their other two sites. Prior to this, the Monou-tedi had been staying with the members of the lower group of Bisaasi-tedi. By early November, the Monou-tedi had begun raiding the Patanowä-tedi with great frequency, supported by members of Paruriwä's group. Paruriwä himself sent three raiding parties against the Patanowä-tedi between November and February, all of which included men from Monou-tedi. Kaobäwä did not participate in or encourage these raids, but some of his followers took part in them.

This split was not the outcome of an internal feud. Rather, it developed out of the different political interests of two leaders, one of whom was ambitiously striving to improve his status as a headman. The other refused to prosecute the war against the Patanowä-tedi, as he had a large number of kinsmen there. The existence of these ties, however, did not preclude the war, as the Bisaasi-tedi are in fact raiding the Patanowä-tedi. The kin ties at best mitigate the intensity of the raiding. The situation is a problem for the Patanowä-tedi, as they do not want to kill the few Bisaasi-tedi friends

[1] Their plan failed, as I took the Patanowä-tedi back to their village part way in my boat, and we went the remainder of the way on a trail the Monou-tedi could not reach.

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

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Visitors waiting in village circle for hosts to invite them "home" (described in Chapter 4).

Shaman (carrying club) shouting to Hekura (demons) while curing a patient (man sitting in foreground). Patient later died of malaria (described in Chapter 2).

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11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

for my complicated storage process. I was able to last most of the day on *café con leche*, heavily sugared espresso coffee diluted about five to one with hot milk. I would prepare this in the evening and store it in a thermos. Frequently, my single meal was no more complicated than a can of sardines and a package of crackers. But at least two or three times a week I would do something sophisticated, like make oatmeal or boil rice and add a can of tuna fish or tomato paste to it. I even saved time by devising a water system that obviated the trips to the river. I had a few sheets of zinc roofing brought in and made a rain-water trap; I caught the water on the zinc surface, funneled it into an empty gasoline drum, and then ran a plastic hose from the drum to my hut. When the drum was exhausted in the dry season, I hired the Indians to fill it with water from the river.

I ate much less when I traveled with the Indians to visit other villages. Most of the time my travel diet consisted of roasted or boiled green plantains (see Glossary) that I obtained from the Indians, but I always carried a few cans of sardines with me in case I got lost or stayed away longer than I had planned. I found peanut butter and crackers a very nourishing food, and a simple one to prepare on trips. It was nutritious and portable, and only one tool was required to prepare the meal; a hunting knife that could be cleaned by wiping the blade on a leaf. More importantly, it was one of the few foods the Indians would let me eat in relative peace. It looked too much like animal feces to them to excite their appetites.

I once referred to the peanut butter as the dung of cattle. They found this quite repugnant. They did not know what "cattle" were, but were generally aware that I ate several canned products of such an animal. I perpetrated this myth, if for no other reason than to have some peace of mind while I ate. Fieldworkers develop strange defense mechanisms, and this was one of my own forms of adaptation. On another occasion I was eating a can of frankfurters and growing very weary of the demands of one of my guests for a share in my meal. When he asked me what I was eating, I replied: "Beef." He then asked. "What part of the animal are you eating?" to which I replied, "Guess!" He stopped asking for a share.

Meals were a problem in another way. Food sharing is important to the Yąnomamö in the context of displaying friendship. "I am hungry," is almost a form of greeting with them. I could not possibly have brought enough food with me to feed the entire village, yet they seemed not to understand this. All they could see was that I did not share my food with them at each and every meal. Nor could I enter into their system of reciprocities with respect to food; every time one of them gave me something "freely," he would dog me for months to pay him back, not with food, but with steel tools. Thus, if I accepted a plantain from someone in a different village while I was on a visit, he would most likely visit me in the future and demand a machete as payment for the time that he "fed" me. I usually reacted to these kinds of demands by giving a banana, the customary reciprocity in their culture—food for food—but this would be a disappointment for the individual who had visions of that single plantain growing into a machete over time.

Despite the fact that most of them knew I would not share my food with them at their request, some of them always showed up at my hut during mealtime. I gradually became accustomed to this and learned to ignore their persistent demands while I ate. Some of them would get angry because I failed to give in, but most of them accepted

276 [412] powder as it dries, the flat side of a stone axe[8] serving as the grinding pestle. The dried, green powder, no more than several tablespoons full, is then swept onto a leaf with a stiff feather. The men then gather around the leaf containing the drug, usually in the late afternoon, and take it by blowing the powder into each other's nostrils (see Fig. 2-3). A small quantity of the powder is introduced into the end of a hollow cane tube some 3 feet long. The tube is then flicked with the forefinger to scatter the powder along its length. One end of the tube is put into the nostril of the man taking the drug, and his helper then blows a strong blast of air through the other end, emitting his breath in such a fashion that he climaxes the delivery with a hard burst of air. Both the recipient and the blower squat on their haunches to do this. The man who had the drug blown into his nostrils grimaces, groans, chokes, coughs, holds his head from the pain of the air blast, and duck-waddles off to some leaning post. He usually receives two doses of the drug, one in each nostril. The recipient usually vomits, gets watery eyes, and develops a runny nose. Much of the drug comes back out in the nasal mucus that begins to run freely after the drug has been administered. Within minutes after the drug has been blown into a man's nose, he begins having difficulties focusing his eyes and starts to act intoxicated. The drug allegedly produces colored visions, especially around the periphery [187] of the visual field, and permits the user to enter into contact with his particular *hekura*, miniature demons that dwell under rocks and on mountains. The man begins to chant to the *hekura* when the drug takes effect, inviting them to come and live in his chest.

245 276 The Yąnomamö also cultivate a tree, *hisiima*, that produces hallucinogenic seeds. These are prepared in exactly the same manner as the noncultivated drug.

322 396 TROUGHS AND CANOES The Yąnomamö use the bark of another kind of tree to make a trough and a crude canoe, both of which are nearly identical in shape, size, and method of construction. The tree is beaten with clubs to loosen the bark. The bark is then removed in one piece and hauled back to the village. The ends are heated in a fire to make them pliable and folded back to make the ends of the container. They are held firm by lashing two sticks together, pinching the folded bark into a flat-nosed basin. The interior bark surface becomes the exterior surface of the soup container. If the container is to be used as a canoe, a crude framework of sticks is added to the inside, giving 501 it more stability. The craft is so crude and heavy that the Yąnomamö generally do not use it for any purpose other than the trip for which it was intended, usually a downstream trip, since it would be almost impossible to move against a current in this rough craft. It is easier to walk than to try to pole the canoe upstream. The canoe, hence, is usually discarded after it makes its maiden voyage. Another will be made when it is needed.

415 The container is pinioned to the ground with stakes if it is to be used as a soup 574 trough. Each time a feast is held, one or more of these bark containers is made in front 264 of the headman's house, filled with the boiled ripe plantain soup, and frequented by the hungry guests, who dip out the soup with gourd spoons. The trough is thrown on the village rubbage heap after the feast is over.

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[172] [8] They find the stone axes when they make new gardens, explaining that the spirits left them behind for the Yąnomamö to use. This area was occupied in the distant past by tribes whose relationship to the present Yąnomamö is uncertain.

Today, however, steel tools are quite common, being provided by the several missionaries who have recently located posts at a number of locations in Yąnomamö territory. The tools that they give to their local people are eventually traded inland to more remote villages so that all the Yąnomamö, even those who have not yet had any direct contact with outsiders, now have steel tools.[7] Before the missionaries arrived, the Yąnomamö occasionally obtained steel tools from the Carib-speaking Makiritare Indians, who have long been in contact with civilization. Some of the Makiritare made periodic canoe trips in the last century as far east as Georgetown in order to obtain these tools. Kąobawä told me that when he was a young man, his village had a single piece of steel, a portion of a broken machete that came ultimately from the Makiritare Indians by way of several intermediate Yąnomamö villages. Everybody in the village used this tool when they made their gardens. It was hafted on a split stick and used as an axe. I have seen broken machetes used in this fashion in the more remote, steel-poor villages.

The Yąnomamö usually fell the big trees toward the end of the wet season, although I have seen them do it at all times of the year. In general, the clearing of the land tends to be an activity of the wet season while the burning is done during the dry season, but this schedule is by no means rigorous. An adequate burning can be achieved at the peak of the rainy season, provided that there are two days of sunshine in succession. The dead brush and the leaves of the large trees dry out rather quickly in the sun, provided that they have been lying on the ground for a sufficiently long period of time. The trunks of the large trees are never burned, so that a newly cleared garden is strewn with logs lying helter-skelter all over the cleared patch. These serve as boundaries between individual gardens, as the crops belong to the person who plants them.

Each man clears his own land. Brothers will usually clear adjacent portions of land and, if their father is still living, his garden will be among theirs. The headman of the village generally has the largest garden, as he must produce larger quantities of food; he is obliged to give food away at feasts. He can frequently enlist the aid of other men to help him make a large garden. Kąobawä, for example, is helped by a younger brother, a brother-in-law, and the latter's son. Once in a while one of his sisters who lives in a different village visits for a long stretch of time, and her son-in-law also helps Kąobawä work in the garden during these visits.

After the brush has dried out and the larger trees felled, the portable timber and brush is gathered up into piles and burned, each man having several fires going in his own patch, to which he hauls the brush as he gathers it up. Usually, the fires are built under or next to one of the larger logs. In this way the logs dry out even more completely and can be easily chopped up by the women for firewood. The ashes are not scattered to improve soil fertility.

If the new site is a great distance from the pervious garden, the men will have to make numerous trips between the two sites in order to transport the plantain cuttings. If an ally's village is closer to the new garden site, some cuttings can be borrowed from his gardens, thereby reducing the transportation labor. Each mature plantain or banana plant sends out suckers which sprout a few feet away from the adult stalk. When the Yąnomamö cut the bunch of plantains or bananas from the producing plant, they also cut the entire plant down to permit the younger suckers to receive the sunlight. The larger

[7] One missionary told me that he has given the residents of his village approximately 3000 machetes over the past eight years! These are traded inland to more remote Yąnomamö.

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that is, the marriage of individuals 1 and 2 of the third generation. Although the ten examples are given primarily to illustrate the marriage of individuals of the most recent generation (3 or 4, depending on the number of generations in each example), in some cases additional marriages in ascending generations will be discussed. The point to remember for the time being is that the genealogies should be looked at from the most recent generation; the marriage pattern can be more readily seen in this fashion.

Case A: This exemplifies the *matrilateral cross-cousin* marriage, sometimes called MoBrDa marriage. Here, the Yąnomamö category *suaböya* corresponds exactly with our biological translation to MoBrDa. The man in question (III–1) would have called the woman *suaböya* whether or not he married her. Similarly, she would have addressed him by the term for husband: *kąsroya*.

The marriage of III–1 to III–2 in this case also exemplifies *patrilateral cross-cousin* marriage, for the woman is related to her husband as FaSiDa as well. This is so because individuals II–1 and II–4 are siblings (brother and sister to each other) because their own fathers, in turn, were brothers. (Individual I–2 was an *adopted* brother to I–3, hence the broken sibling line connecting them.) When an individual marries a woman who is simultaneously his FaSiDa and MoBrDa, he is said to marry his *bilateral cross-cousin*. Case A illustrates the preferred form of marriage, for the man does not have to avoid his wife's parents as stringently as he would were they related to him in a different fashion. When a man's father-in-law is his MoBr, he is on extremely intimate terms with him and can even make jokes at his expense. The intimacy of the relationship between a man and his MoBr was brought home to me very indelibly on one occasion. A group of Patanowä-teri men visited Kąobawä, although their two villages were at war. One of the visitors was Kąobawä's wife's brother. After this man rested in a hammock for a few minutes, he got up and found Ariwari, Kąobawä's son. Ariwari was the visitor's sister's son. He played with him in the hammock and hugged him intimately (see Fig. 3–3). Ariwari fell asleep in his arms. This took place in spite of the fact that the visitors were in danger of being killed by other members of Kąobawä's group and narrowly escaped death on their previous visit. (See the section "Division of Labor and Daily Social Life" later in this chapter for a description of the incident.)

Case B: This illustrates the same kind of marriage that took place in Case A, except that the parents of the married people are half-siblings to each other. The Yąnomamö do nöt distinguish half-siblings from full siblings, so this situation is identical, as far as they are concerned, to the marriage in case A.

Case B also illustrates *several polygyny:* III–1 married two women who were related to each other as sisters.

Finally, it should be noted that the father of the man in question married a sister to individual II–3. They stood in wife-giver/wife-receiver relationship to each other and so do their children.

Case C: This illustrates the *patrilateral cross-cousin* marriage, that is, the FaSiDa marriage. Like the MoBrDa marriage, it is preferred because the man does not have to avoid his wife's parents. It is considered to be incestuous for a man to be familiar with his wife's mother if the woman is still sexually active. Hence, he must avoid her. If she is his FaSi, however, incest prohibitions pertaining to that kinswoman would automatically call forth appropriate behavior on his part, and the avoidance taboo is not stringent.

TABLE 3-3
SEX-RATIO DATA ON SELECTED VILLAGES

	Males	Females	Totals
Upper Bisaasi-teri	37	48	85
Lower Bisaasi-teri	25	26	51
Monou-teri	34	32	66
Reyabobōwei-teri	52	46	98
Mōmaribōwei-teri	50	46	96
Patanowā-teri	122	90	212
Aikam-teri and Roko-teri	129	103	232
	449	391	840

Table 3-3 gives sex-ratio data on seven groups of Yąnomamō. The first three villages are not truly representative of the population in general, but are included because they have been frequently discussed in the text.

They are not representative because some 15 men from these villages were killed in a single treacherous feast in 1950, a significant fraction of the adult male population. These feasts are not very frequent. The three groups are allied to each other and have been extremely successful at coercing two neighboring Shamatari villages out of women; a surprisingly high proportion of their women come from these allies. As we shall see, they have been successful because of the geographical and historical relationships that characterize the alliance network in this area.

DEMOGRAPHIC BASIS As is apparent, there are more males in the Yąnomamō population than females. This demographic fact results from the practice of selectively killing female babies: *female infanticide*. The Yąnomamō also practice male infanticide, but because of the preference to have a male as their first child, they unknowingly kill more females than males. The Yąnomamō have only three numbers: one, two, and more-than-two. They are, accordingly, poor statisticians. They are quite unaware of the fact that they do kill more female babies, and every time I questioned them about it, they insisted that they killed both kinds—"more-than-two" of both kinds.

A child is killed at birth, irrespective of its sex, if the mother already has a nursing baby. They rationalize the practice by asserting that the new infant would probably die anyway, since its older sibling would drink most of the milk. They are most reluctant to jeopardize the health and safety of a nursing child by weaning it before it is three years old or so, preferring to kill the competitor instead. Kąobawā's wife, Bahimi, killed a newborn male shortly after I began my fieldwork. She later told me, quite tearfully, that it would have taken milk away from Ariwari, Kąobawā's favorite child. Ariwari at the time was over two years old, but Bahimi refused to wean him. Sometimes a child is killed simply because the mother doesn't feel that she can care for it properly and that it would be an inconvenience to have to tend a baby. I once saw a plump, well-fed, young mother eating a large quantity of food that would have been suitable to give to an older infant. Her emaciated, filthy, and nearly starved child—about two years old—kept reaching out for the food. The mother explained that the baby had gotten a bad case of diarrhea some time ago and had stopped eating. As a consequence, her milk dried up. She refused to attempt to feed it other foods because "it did not know how to eat other foods." When

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sexually active females. Some of the teen-age males have homosexual affairs with each other; the females of their own age are usually married. By the time a young man is twenty years old or so he is anxious to display his masculinity, and at that point becomes a competitor for the sexual favors of the village belles—married belles. This causes considerable friction and results in club fighting. (See Chapter 5.)

Still another factor leads to breeches of the marriage rule: chance. In some villages there are disproportionately more males (or females) of the same lineage because of the way in which the group split from a different village. Again, there may be no eligible females when a young man is old enough to marry. His only choice is to seek a wife in a different village. Rerebawä, for example, was forced into this situation. His own village is quite small (about 50 people), but it is dominated numerically by members of his own lineage. Hence, most of the females in the village are related to him as mother, sister, or daughter. The remaining females are married to his older brothers. He therefore came to Upper Bisasi-teri—an ally of his village—to seek a wife.

Thus, political necessity, cultural practices relating to population control, unequal distribution of women, and chance combine to produce situations in which people cannot follow their prescriptive marriage rules. The factors dealing with politics are the most meaningful in explanations of the discrepancy between Yanomamö marriage behavior and ideal models of that behavior.

POLITICAL BASIS The importance of politics can be demonstrated by citing a few incidents in the history of several villages and explaining how alliances and hostilities develop over time.

In Chapter 1 I briefly described the political milieu within which Kaobawä's village was situated. The relationships that exist at the present time make considerably more sense when they are viewed in the perspective of the historical events that led up to them. The reasons for village fissions and wars and why particular villages have entered into alliances with each other will now be explored briefly.[14]

The more important political ties currently maintained by Kaobawä's group have antecedents that go back to approximately 1940. At that time the present villages of Patanowä-teri, Monou-teri, and Upper and Lower Bisasi-teri were one large village (see Fig. 2-8). In 1940, they were known collectively as the Patanowä-teri. To their south was a series of villages whose residents are collectively known as the Shamatari people. The Patanowä-teri were on friendly terms with most of the Shamatari and frequently visited them in order to trade. Just prior to 1940, an epidemic, probably malaria, resulted in the deaths of a number of Patanowä-teri. The Shamatari were suspected of causing the epidemic by practicing harmful magic. The first Shamatari man to visit the village after the epidemic, Ruwabiwä, was treacherous killed by a man who presently lives in Monou-teri; he bashed his head open with an axe. This immediately precipitated a war between the Patanowä-teri and several of the Shamatari villages.

A few years after the war started the Patanowä-teri fissioned into two groups: they relocated their gardens, but remained fairly close to each other geographically. This split was caused by constant bickering within the group and club fights over women. The two new villages thus formed were friendly enough to each other to live in the same

[14] discussed these relationships in considerable detail in my doctoral dissertation, Chagnon, 1966. The following account is a simplified version.

general area, but too hostile to remain together in a single village. Largely due to food theft, their mutual political relationships gradually worsened. The two groups returned to the old site in order to harvest the fruits of the cultivated peach-palm tree, as each tree is owned by the person who plants it. Some of the fruit belonging to a man in one of the groups was stolen by a man in the other group. This led to a club fight between the two villages, after which they parted on hostile terms. The group that included Kąobawä decided to abandon their new garden and establish another one further away, anticipating a raid from the other group. Ultimately, the members of the two villages began raiding each other and entered into a prolonged and bloody war that was still raging when I left the field in 1967.

About 1949, to avoid the Patanowä-teri raids, Kąobawä and his group moved to an even more remote location. From here, they began visiting one of the Shamatari villages, Iwahikoroba-teri, located to the south of them. Unfortunately, the people of Iwahikoroba-teri were allied to the Shamatari group (Ruwahiwä's village) with which Kąobawä's group was at war. At the instigation of Kąobawä's enemies, the Iwahikoroba-teri invited his group to a feast during which many of them were treacherously killed, including Kąobawä's father. This incident took place sometime in the period December–January of 1950–1951. The survivors, many of them badly wounded, fled to a newly cleared garden site they had established a day's walk north of their village. They returned to their village only to obtain food, which they carried back to their new but nonproducing garden. After the wounded had removed the arrow points and were on the road to recovery, the group moved back into their producing garden. By this time word of the treachery had spread to all the villages in the area. The headman of Mahekodo-teri, the only village located on the Orinoco River in 1950, visited Kąobawä's group and invited them to take refuge with his people.[15] Kąobawä and his group readily accepted the invitation, and they moved into Mahekodo-teri, knowing that they could prosecute the war with the Shamatari only if they had allies and could raid from a great distance. Their own village was too close to Shamatari territory, and their capacity to raid was greatly reduced after so many of their men had been killed.

Kąobawä knew that the generous offer from the Mahekodo-teri was not entirely stimulated by altruistic motives. In 1910 his group had been forced to take refuge with an ally because of a war; the ally demanded in return many of the guests' women. Similarly, the Mahekodo-teri coerced Kąobawä's group into ceding a number of women, the price a weakened and dependent village must pay for the support of a stronger ally. It was later learned that the Mahekodo-teri planned to kill the rest of the men and abduct all of the women, but an unexpected war delayed their plot. (See Chagnon 1966.) Two of Kąobawä's sisters were among those claimed by the Mahekodo-teri; one of them still lives there, and the other was taken away from her Mahekodo-teri husband by force by Rerebawä's brother.

Kąobawä and his group lived with their protectors off-and-on for about a year, while they worked assiduously at making their new gardens. Because of internal fighting, they decided to make two new gardens and form two separate villages. The year was

[15] James P. Barker of the New Tribes Mission had just moved into Mahekodo-teri a few months earlier, marking the beginning of the Yąnomamö's first sustained contact with any outsiders. He witnessed the arrival of Kąobawä's group.

spent according to a schedule of work alternated with periods of rest. They would live in the Mahekodo-teri village for about three weeks at a stretch, resting from their gardening tasks, and return to their new gardens for about three weeks of intensive clearing and cultivation. Their plantings and seeds were provided by the Mahekodo-teri.[16] They carried their provisions from the Mahekodo-teri gardens while they worked at their new gardens, sending men back for more as these ran short. As soon as one of the new gardens was producing, they moved away from the Mahekodo-teri. The second garden was completed after their move, and the Monou-teri separated from Kąbowī's group. This was about 1954. During the time they lived with the Mahekodo-teri, they raided the Shamatari frequently, and were raided in return. The Shamatari ambushed and killed two Mahekodo-teri on one raid, causing the Mahekodo-teri to actively prosecute the war with the Shamatari to avenge these deaths.

Kąobawī's group abondoned the new site and moved to the Orinoco River shortly after the Monou-teri separated from them. They had established a garden on the Orinoco during the time that the Monou-teri were completing their own site. In short, the garden that was made while Kąobawī and his group lived with the Mahekodo-teri was simply a vantage point that permitted the group to take leave of its protectors as soon as possible, while they established gardens in more desirable locations.

Kąobawī's group moved down the Orinoco River in 1959–1960, after having lived at the new site only five years. This move was stimulated by the appearance of a government malaria team that established a small station at the mouth of the Mavaca River. Kąobawī's group moved across the river from them in order to be in a position to obtain steel tools from the newly arrived foreigners. Kąobawī's group fissioned again in the process of this move; the Lower Bisaasi-teri established a separate garden and built their own village just across the Mavaca River from Kąobawī's group. The fission was not complete, however, as both sections of Bisaasi-teri built a common village that they occupied during the dry season, when they conducted their feasts and went on raiding parties.

Kąobawī's group made contacts with a large Shamatari village, Paruritawā-teri, shortly after having moved to the mouth of the Mavaca River in 1959–1960. This village had fissioned from one of the Shamatari groups that participated in the treacherous feast in 1950 and was on semifriendly terms with it. Thus, Kąobawī and his group saw an opportunity to get revenge on their archenemies. They cultivated an alliance with the Paruritawā-teri and succeeded in getting them to participate in a treacherous feast. The Paruritawā-teri themselves were fissioning into two groups, so they made two new gardens southwest of Kąobawī's village in preparation for the treacherous feast. The feast invitation was sent (1960) to the unsuspecting Shamatari by the Paruritawā-teri. But many of them were sick, and only five men and four women ultimately came to the treacherous feast at Paruritawā-teri. Kąobawī and his followers, as well as the Monou-teri, secreted themselves outside the village while the Paruritawā-teri entertained the hapless guests inside. They managed to kill three of the five men and seized all of the women. The Paruritawā-teri abandoned their garden, anticipating the inevitable revenge raids and moved to the two new sites, fissioning into two groups of about 95 people.

This treacherous feast put the Paruritawā-teri in a very poor position. They were (and are) the westernmost Yąnomamö in the area, and their closest neighbors were the

[16] James Barker informed me of the schedule followed by Kąobawī and his group.

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Monou-teri, Lower Bisaasi-teri, and Kąobawä's group. All their other neighbors, allied to the victims of the treacherous feast, relentlessly raided them. They were, in short, extremely dependent on Kąobawä's group and the two other villages related to Kąobawä's group.

Kąobawä and his followers have astutely finessed this situation in two ways. First, they have managed to coerce the two Shamatari villages into ceding women without reciprocating an equal number of their own in return. The men who have obtained Shamatari wives have, as well, managed to cut short their period of bride service in the Shamatari village. Conversely, Shamatari men who have been promised women of Kąobawä's group are pressed into very lengthy bride service, sometimes up to three years. Secondly, Kąobawä's group has prevented the two Shamatari allies from re-establishing friendly contacts with the other Shamatari to their southeast by chicane, threat, and intimidation. One of the two Shamatari allies, the Reyaboböwei-teri, has attempted a rapprochement with the Shamatari enemies of Kąobawä's group. In 1965, several months after I had been living in Kąobawä's village, Kąobawä's group managed to stage another treacherous feast for the old enemies by taking advantage of the renewed ties between the Reyaboböwei-teri and the enemies. They learned that the Reyaboböwei-teri planned to invite one of the villages to a feast, so they, along with the Monou-teri, Lower Bisaasi-teri, and Mõmariböwei-teri, went to the feast in order to ambush the guests. The Reyaboböwei-teri, however, were reluctant to go through with the plan and warned the visitors about it. The visitors were en route to the village when word of the treachery reached them. This had the effect of creating even more difficulties for the Reyaboböwei-teri, for it is highly unlikely that they will succeed in gaining the confidence of their neighbors to the southeast. Nevertheless, some visiting between the groups still continues.[17]

The historical relationships between the villages helps account for the reasons behind contemporary alliance patterns. The discrepancy between marriage rules and actual marriage practice in Lower Bisaasi-teri is a result of the political advantages that group enjoys over one of its allies. It has used this advantage to gain a favorable imbalanced marriage exchange pattern, but one that is only temporary. The Shamatari are also shrewd in their alliance practices, and have succeeded in neutralizing their disadvantages by capitalizing on schisms between Kąobawä's group and Lower Bisaasi-teri. This has been done largely by confining their marriage exchanges to important men in the dominant lineages of Upper and Lower Bisaasi-teri. One of the Shamatari villages, Mõmaribowei-teri, has restricted its exchanges to Lower Bisaasi-teri and Monou-teri, while completely ignoring Upper Bisaasi-teri. The other Shamatari village has given its women only to Upper Bisaasi-teri. This has resulted in the weakening of ties between the three villages of Upper Bisaasi-teri, Lower Bisaasi-teri, and Monou-teri, whose members are

[17] I plan to use these visiting ties to establish contact with the Shamatari villages in that area, none of which have had contact with outsiders. These uncontacted Shamatari, however, know who I am because I attempted to reach them in 1965. They subsequently sent a message out urging me to visit them, angry because my guides forced me to turn back on my first attempt. In 1966 they even sent an old man to Kąobawä's village by way of Reyaboböwei-teri with an invitation for me to visit them. I had already left Venezuela by that time. Most of the men in the two contacted Shamatari villages tried to prevent me from going by telling horrible tales of the treachery that awaited my visit, describing how the Shamatari will kill me. The truth of the matter is that they know that I will bring the uncontacted Shamatari machetes and axes that might otherwise be given to them. The headman of one of the uncontacted villages has a brother in Mõmariböwei-teri. He privately conceded that no harm would befall me and offered to take me to visit in 1967. He was, unfortunately, bitten by a snake just before I arrived in March of 1967, and my plans were deferred until 1968.

602 other when they are children and young men. As time passes and these men become old
571 enough to seek wives, members of the groups to which they belong enter into competi-
602 tion with each other. The men themselves are under some pressure to display their per-
571 sonal autonomy, and they treat each other with considerable reserve as they get older.
578 They cannot boss each other around or expect many favors from one another. Kaobawä, for example, cannot ask his adult brothers to perform menial tasks for him. This is because each man—particularly those men who compete for the same women—attempts to convince all others that he is capable of ferocity. The more remote the genealogical distance, the greater is the reserve with which mature agnates treat each other. That is, distant parallel cousins would behave toward each other with considerably more reserve than would actual brothers, although the men in question are all related to each other terminologically as brothers. If such men live in different villages, their mutual relationships are even more reserved when they meet.

602 The relationship between men who call each other brother-in-law, however, grows
609 more intimate as the men get older. They can play and joke with each other, whereas
571 agnates cannot, for they are not competitors and are not constrained to exhibit their
581 fierceness to each other. They can cement their relationships to each other by merely
582 promising to give their daughters to each other's sons. They can ask favors of each other, expecting them to be done without complaint.

602 Kaobawä's relationships to two men in his village illustrate the distinction be-
[601] tween agnates and affines. Both men joined his group from the village of Patanowä-teri some time after Kaobawä's group separated from the village. One of the men, Nadesiwä, is related to him agnatically: they call each other "brother" because their fathers were
[613] half-brothers. Nadesiwä is in Kaobawä's local descent group, but is not quite on a par
[581] with the other members in the political affairs of the group. The other men in the
[582] group—Kaobawä and his closer brothers—put pressure on Nadesiwä to give his only daughter to a man in a distant Shamatari village for the purpose of stabilizing an alliance. This was a considerable sacrifice for him to make, as his daughter, after the
[591] completion of bride service, will have to live in her husband's village—Nadesiwä will
[609] have no coresident son-in-law to provide him with meat when he gets old. Kaobawä and Nadesiwä treat each other with respect and great reserve and do not ask each other for favors.

602 The other man, Kumamawä, is Bahimi's actual brother; Kaobawä is related to
609 him, therefore, as an affine as well as by cognatic kinship ties. That is, they are first
[591] cross-cousins by blood and also related to each other by marriage. Kumamawä is a
[613] frequent visitor in Kaobawä's house and enthusiastically executes the numerous tasks that Kaobawä asks of him. They are members of different local descent groups, but their groups are related to each other by marriage exchanges that go back several generations. In short, Kaobawä's personal ties to his brother-in-law are warmer and friendlier than his relationship to one of the members of his own local descent group.

Daily Activities

361 Kaobawä's village is oval-shaped. His house is located among those of his
342 agnatic kinsmen; they occupy a continuous arc along one side of the village. Each of the

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On another occasion a group of men from Patanowä-teri arrived to explore with Kąobawä the possibility of peace between their two villages. They were brothers-in-law to him and were fairly certain that he would protect them from the village hotheads. One of the ambitious men in Kąobawä's group saw in this an opportunity to enhance his prestige and made plans to murder the three visitors. This man, Paruriwä, was a very cunning, treacherous fellow and quite jealous of Kąobawä's position as headman. He wanted to be the village leader and privately told me to address him as the headman. On this occasion Kąobawä let it be known that he intended to protect the visitors. For the better part of the day the village was in a state of suspense. Paruriwä and his followers were not to be found anywhere; a rumor spread that they had painted themselves black and were well armed. Kąobawä and his supporters, mostly his own brothers and brothers-in-law, remained in the village all day, their weapons close at hand. Late in the afternoon Paruriwä and his men appeared in their black paint and took up strategic posts around the village. He himself held an axe. He strutted arrogantly up to the visitors holding his axe as if he were ready to strike. The village became very quiet, and most of the women and children left. Neither Kąobawä nor the Patanowä-teri visitors batted an eyelash when Paruriwä approached, although the others were visibly nervous and sat up in their hammocks. Instead of striking the visitors with the axe as he appeared to suggest he was going to do, he invited one of them out to chant with him. Within seconds all three of the visitors had paired off with members of Paruriwä's group and were chanting passionately with them, explaining the reasons for their visit and giving their justification for the state of hostilites.

The crisis has been averted because of Kąobawä's implied threat that he would defend the visitors with force. A number of men in Paruriwä's group were visitors from Monou-teri; their headman had been killed a few months earlier by the Patanowä-teri. When Paruriwä failed to go through with his plan, they left the village in a rage, hoping to recruit a raiding party in their own village and ambush the visitors when they left.

Kąobawä realized that the visitors would not be safe until they got back home, since the Monou-teri would attempt to intercept them. He visited me that night and asked me to take the visitors back to their village at dawn in my canoe, knowing that I had already planned a trip there for the immediate future. After I agreed to accelerate my own plans, he proceeded to give me instructions about the trip: I was not to stop at any of the villages along the Orinoco River to visit, for all of them were at war with the Patanowä-teri and would shoot my companions on sight. The Patanowä-teri men lay on the floor of my canoe and covered themselves with a tarp when we passed these villages. The people on the bank shouted curses at me for not stopping to visit and give them trade goods. At this time the Patanowä-teri were being raided by about a dozen different villages. We had to cover part of the distance to their village on foot, proceeding very cautiously because of the danger of raiders. At one point the men showed me the spot where a Hasaböwä-teri raiding party had killed a Patanowä-teri woman a week earlier. Thus, Kąobawä not only protected the visitors while they were in his village but he also arranged a "safe-conduct" for their return.

Kąobawä keeps order in the village when people get out of hand. Paruriwä, for example, is particularly cruel to his four wives and beats them mercilessly for even slight provocations. None of his wives have brothers in the village, and few people are courageous enough to interfere with Paruriwä when he is angry. On one occasion Kąobawä was holding a feast for the members of an allied village. His preparations were being

156 622 578 his group was being trounced by their opponents, largely because only a few of the men were doing all the fighting for Kaobawä's group. These men were forced to take several turns in rapid succession, while a large number of men stood by and watched. The fighters wanted to escalate the battle to a duel with axes, hoping to intimidate their opponents into conceding. Kaobawä quickly forced the idle men to participate in the chest pounding, thereby distributing the punishment a little more evenly and reducing the possibility of a bloodier confrontation.

After the duel was over, Kaobawä coolly discussed the fight with the leaders in the opponents' group, explaining that he did not intend to raid them unless they raided first. A number of men in the village, notably Paruriwä and some of his followers, shouted threats at the departing opponents that they would shoot them on sight should they meet again. Paruriwä frequently boasted like this, but rarely put himself in a position that was potentially dangerous. He later ran into a party of hunters from the above-mentioned group while he was leading a raid against the Patanowä-teri. Instead of shooting them on sight as he threatened to do (they could have shot back, as they were armed), he traded arrows with them and rapidly retreated. He boasted in the village how he had terrified these men. I later visited their village and learned that Paruriwä was the one who was terrified. They themselves continued to hunt, while Paruriwä fled for home.

156 622 602 [157] Kaobawä's personality differs considerably from Paruriwä's. Where the former is unobtrusive, calm, modest, and perceptive, the latter is belligerent, aggressive, ostentatious, and rash. Kaobawä has an established status in the village and numerous supporters, whose loyalties are in part determined by their kinship ties and in part because he is a wise leader. Paruriwä is attempting to share in the leadership and does not have a well-established position in this respect. It is obvious who the real leader is: When visitors come to Upper Bisaasi-teri, they seek out Kaobawä and deal with him, no matter how ambitiously Paruriwä attempts to emulate his position. Paruriwä does not have as many living brothers in his group as Kaobawä has, so his "natural following" is somewhat limited. In addition, two of his brothers are married to actual sisters of Kaobawä and have some loyalty to him. Paruriwä, therefore, has very little means with which to establish his position, so he is given over to using bluff, threat, chicanery, and treachery. This he does well, and many of the young men in the village admire him for it. He has gained the support of some of these men by promising them his wives' yet unborn daughters. Remarkably enough, some of them cling to these promises and do his bidding.

622 726 Finally, one of Kaobawä's most unpleasant tasks is to scout the village neighborhood when signs of raiders have been found. This he does alone, since it is a dangerous task and one that is avoided by the other men. Not even Paruriwä participates in this.

Kaobawa has definite responsibilities as the headman and is occasionally called upon by the nature of the situation to exercise his authority. He is usually distinguishable in the village as a man of some authority only for the duration of the incident that calls forth his leadership capacity. After the incident is over, he goes about his own business like the other men in the group. But even then, he sets an example for the [514] others, particularly in his ambitions to produce large quantities of food for his family and for the guests he must entertain. Most of the time he leads only by example and the others follow if it pleases them to do so. They can ignore his example if they wish, but most of the people turn to him when a difficult situation arises.

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4

Political Alliances, Trading and Feasting

YANOMAMÖ FEASTS take place only when one sovereign group entertains the members of another, allied group. Feasts, in brief, are political events. To be sure, economic and ceremonial implications are also significant, but these are relatively minor when compared to the functions of the feast in the context of forming alliances. The chief purpose of entertaining allies is to reaffirm and cultivate intervillage solidarity in the intimate, sociable context of food presentations, thereby putting the ally under obligation to reciprocate the feast in his own village at a later date, bringing about another feast and even more solidarity.

I will describe in this chapter some of the relationships between trade, economic specialization, historical ties between groups, warfare, and intervillage marriage exchanges, all of which are intimately connected and interact with each other in the process of developing political alliances.

I described in Chapter 2 how the members of independent villages cultivated friendships with each other in the process of establishing themselves in a loose network of allied villages. I then showed in Chapter 3 how Kaobawä's followers were related to him and how he, in turn, was related to the members of several other villages. Now I will take up some of the political consequences of the historical ties and how they shape and mould the nature of specific contemporary relationships between Kaobawä's group and those which have political dealings with it. To illustrate this, I will describe the details of a particular feast in the context of the political ties, both historical and contemporary, existing between Kaobawä's group and the guests at the feast. First, however, I will comment on Yanomamö alliances in general.

General Features of Alliances

One of the expectations and implications of alliance is that the partners are under obligation to provide shelter and sustenance to each other whenever one of them is driven from his village and garden by a powerful enemy. The beleaguered partner may be

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The beleaguered partner may be obliged to remain in the village of his host for a year or longer, approximately the length of time required to establish a new plantation and productive base from which an independent existence is possible. Twice in the recent history of Kaobawä's group they were driven from their gardens by more powerful enemies and were forced to take refuge in the village of an ally. In each case the group remained with the ally for a year or so, moving away only after their new garden began producing. In both cases, the hosts demanded and received a number of women from Kaobawä's group without reciprocating in kind, a prerogative they exercised from their temporary position of strength. The longer the group takes advantage of a hosts' protection, the higher is the cost in terms of women, so visitors always make an attempt to establish their gardens as quickly as possible and move into them as soon as they begin producing. Without allies, therefore, the members of a village would either have to remain at their single garden and sustain the attacks of their enemies or disband into several smaller groups and join larger villages on a permanent basis, losing many of their women to their protectors. The jungle simply does not produce enough wild foods to sustain larger groups, and the threat of warfare is such that smaller groups would soon be discovered by their enemies and exterminated.

Because of the ever-present risk of being driven from one's garden, therefore, no Yanomamö village can continue to exist as a sovereign entity without establishing alliances with other groups. Warfare is attended by a bellicose ideology which asserts that strong villages should take advantage of weaker ones and coerce them out of women; to prevent this, all villages should therefore behave as if they were strong. Thus, the military threat creates a situation in which intervillage alliance is desirable, but at the same time spawns a military ideology that inhibits the formation of such alliances: Allies need but cannot trust each other. They are obliged to behave aggressively in order to display their respective strength.

Alliances between villages are the product of a developmental sequence that involves casual trading, mutual feasting, and finally the exchange of women. The most intimate allies are those who, in addition to trading and feasting, exchange women. Any developing alliance may stabilize at the trading or feasting stage without proceeding to the woman-exchange phase. These are weak alliances, but serve to limit the degree of war that might possibly obtain between the villages so related. The Yanomamö tend to avoid attacking those villages with which they trade and feast, unless some specific incident, such as the abduction of a woman, provokes them. Allies that are linked by trade and feasting ties, for example, rarely accuse each other of practicing harmful magic. Allies bound to each other by affinal kinship ties, however, are more interdependent because they are under obligation to each other to continue to exchange women. It is, in fact, by the exchange of women that independent villages extend kinship ties to each other.

Members of allied villages are usually reluctant to take the final step in alliance formation and cede women to their partners, for they are always worried that the latter might not reciprocate as promised. This attitude is especially conspicuous in smaller villages, for their larger partners in defense pressure them into demonstrating their solidarity by ceding women; the strong can and do coerce the weak in Yanomamö politics. The weak, therefore, are compelled to exaggerate their strength by bluff and intimidation and by attempting in general to appear to be stronger, militarily, than they really are, thereby hoping to convince their partners that they are equals, capable of an independent

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existence. By so doing, they also inform their partners that any attempt to coerce them out of women will be met with the appropriate reaction, such as a chest-pounding duel or club fight. Nevertheless, each ally expects to gain women in the alliance and enters it with this in mind; and each hopes to gain more women than it cedes in return.

Hence, in order for an occasional nervous meeting of groups of men from different villages to evolve into a stable intervillage alliance based on the reciprocal exchange of women, the long and difficult road of feasting and trading must be traversed. Suspicion must give way to relative confidence, and this must develop into reciprocal feasting during the dry season. Only then has the intervillage relationship reached a point where the partners begin ceding women to each other; and even then, it is done reluctantly.

This is, however, only the ideal pattern in the development of an alliance. Rarely does it develop far enough to reach the stage where women change hands, particularly if the two villages concerned are of approximately the same military strength. Fights and arguments over women or food develop, and the principals withdraw temporarily on semihostile terms, perhaps attempting a rapprochement sometime in the future. Or, if the principals are obviously different military potential, the stronger of the two will coerce its weaker partner into ceding women early in the alliance development, taking advantage of its own military strength, thus altering the course of alliance development in the opposite direction.

Whatever the specific developmental sequence leading to the woman-exchange phase, the milieu within which these developments take place is not conducive to the establishment of warm ties of friendship. Each of the principals attempts to demonstrate his own sovereignty in order to convince the other that he does not really require political alliance to keep his enemies in check. This is accomplished by bragging about past military victories and fierceness in past club fights and chest-pounding duels, and by insinuating that one's group is always on the verge of exploding into a force so great that no combination of allies could overcome its terrible might. The smaller the village and more obvious its vulnerability, the greater is the pressure to insinuate or to demonstrate this potential.

Political maneuvering in this milieu is both a tricky and potentially hazardous undertaking. Each principal in the negotiation must establish the credibility of his own threats, while discovering the point at which his partner's bluff will dissolve abruptly into action; he must discover the point beyond which he must not goad his ally, lest he himself is prepared to suffer the possibly violent outcome. It is a politics of brinkmanship, a form of political behavior in which each negotiator is compelled to expose his opponent's threats as bluffs at the risk of inciting him to violence—a club fight, immediately and honorably, or, later and treacherously, a feast in which the hosts descend on their guests to kill their men and abduct their women.

Trading and Feasting in Alliance Formation

Because an ally is not beyond taking advantage of his weaker partner, especially when the alliance is just developing, there is very little in the way of natural attraction to encourage the two groups to visit each other. Considerations of pride and canons of ferocity preclude obvious attempts to develop stable and predictable alliances and military

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interdependency. The Yąnomamö cannot simply arrive at the village of a potential ally and declare that they need military assistance because of the raids of a superior enemy. Doing so would admit vulnerability and perhaps invite predation from the potential ally. Instead, they conceal and subsume the true motive for the alliance in the vehicles of *trading* and *feasting*, developing these institutions over months and even years. In this manner they retain an apparent modicum of sovereignty and pride, while simultaneously attaining the true objectives: intervillage solidarity and military interdependence.

Three distinct features of Yąnomamö trading practices are important in the context of alliance formation. First, each item must be repaid with a different kind of item: The recipient is under an *obligation* to repay his partner in a type of exchange called *no mrəiha*. Secondly, the payment is delayed, a temporal factor in the trading techniques that is likewise implied by the *no mrəiha*. The consequence of these two trading features is that one trade always calls forth another and gives the members of different villages both the excuse and the opportunity to visit each other; and once the trading starts, it tends to continue, for one village in an alliance always owes the other trade goods from their last confrontation. The third significant trade feature is the peculiar specialization in the production of trade items. Each village has one or more special products that it provides to its allies. These include such items as dogs, hallucinogenic drugs (both cultivated and collected), arrow points, arrow shafts, bows, cotton yarn, cotton and vine hammocks, baskets of several varieties, clay pots, and, in the case of the several contacted villages, steel tools and aluminum pots.

This specialization in production cannot be explained in terms of the distribution of natural resources. Each village is, economically speaking, capable of self-sufficiency. (The steel tools and other products from civilization constitute the major exceptions.) The explanation of the specialization must be sought, rather, in the sociological aspects of alliance formation. Trade functions as the social catalyst, the "starting mechanism," through which mutually suspicious allies are repeatedly brought together in direct confrontation. Without these frequent contacts with neighbors, alliances would be much slower in formation and would be even more unstable once formed: A prerequisite to stable alliance is repetitive visiting and feasting, and the trading mechanism serves to bring about these visits.

Clay pots are a good example of the specialization in labor that characterizes Yąnomamö production and trade. The Mõjaribõwei-teri (see map, Fig. 2-8) are allied to both Kąobawä's group and the people of a distant Shamatari village, the latter being mortal enemies of Kąobawä. When I first began my fieldwork, I visited the Mõjaribõwei-teri, specifically asking them if they knew how to make clay pots. They all vigorously denied knowledge of pot-making, explaining that they once knew how to make them but had long since forgotten. They explained that their allies, the Mõwaraoba-teri, made them in quantities and provided all they needed, and therefore they did not have to make them anymore. They also added that the clay in the area of their village was not of the proper type for making pots. Later in the year their alliance with the pot makers grew cool because of a war, and their source of pots was shut off. At the same time, Kąobawä's group began asking them for clay pots. The Mõjaribõwei-teri promptly responded by "remembering" how pots were made and "discovering" that the clay in their neighborhood was indeed suitable for pot manufacturing. They had merely created

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a local shortage of the item in order to have to rely on an ally for it, giving sufficient cause to visit them.

Often the specialization is less individualized than in the case of clay pot manufacture. Kąobawĩ's group, for example, exports cotton yarn to one ally, but imports it from another. The exported cotton frequently is brought back in the form of manufactured hammocks, the importer merely contributing labor to the process. In some cases, the shortages are merely seasonal; Kąobawĩ's group may import cotton from a particular ally at one time of the year, but export it at another. Most of the trade, however, involves items that are readily manufactured by or raised by any group, underscoring the fact that trade is the stimulus to visit. Food does not enter the trading system, although hospitality dictates that it must be given to friendly groups. Occasionally, a village will run short of plantains because of a particularly long hot spell, and its members may visit an ally to borrow food to last a week or so. This hospitality is usually reciprocated, but it is not a part of the trading network.

Alliances between villages may stabilize at any one of three points: sporadic reciprocal trading, mutual feasting, or reciprocal women exchange. These are cumulative levels in the sense that the third phase implies the first two: Allies that exchange women also feast and trade with each other. Likewise, allies that merely feast together also trade, but do not exchange women. At the lower end of this scale of solidarity lie those villages with which one fights to kill, while at the upper end are those villages from whom one's group has recently separated. Frequently, the scale is circular rather than linear: A village's mortal enemy is the group from which it has recently split. By way of example, Kąobawĩ's group trades sporadically with the Makorima-teri, Daiyari-teri, Widokaiya-teri, Mahekodo-teri, and Iyawei-teri. These are fairly weak alliances and even permit limited fighting. His group has more intimate ties with the Reyabobŏwei-teri and Mąmaribŏwei-teri, with whom it feasts regularly. The alliance with the Reyabobŏwei-teri has even reached the point at which they are exchanging women with each other. Finally, at the other end of the scale, Kąobawĩ's group is at war with the Iwahikoroba-teri, Mŏwarabo-teri, and Patanowĩ-teri. The first two of these groups are historically unrelated to Kąobawĩ's group, although they have a common history with two of his staunchest allies, the Reyabobŏwei-teri and Mąmaribowei-teri, from whom they separated in the past. The Patanowĩ-teri are related to Kąobawĩ and his followers, as was shown in Chapter 3. Nevertheless, they are bitter enemies and are at present raiding each other.

Although there is no rigid geographical correlation of the village settlement pattern to the degree of alliance solidarity, neighboring villages usually are at least on trading terms and are not actively conducting war on each other. Should war develop between neighbors, one of the two principals will abandon its site and move to a new location. Whether the ties between neighboring villages will be one of blood, marriage exchange, reciprocal feasting, or casual trading depends on a large number of factors, particularly on village size, current warfare situation with respect to more distant groups, and the precise historical ties between the neighboring villages. Whatever the nature of the ties between neighbors, each strives to maintain its sovereignty and independence from the others.

The Yąnomamŏ do not openly regard trade as a mechanism the ulterior function of which is to bring people repeatedly together, thus establishing an amicable basis from

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which more stable types of alliance can develop. Nor do they overtly acknowledge the relationships between trading and feasting cycles to village interdependency. In this regard they are like the Trobriand Islanders of Melanesia: They have a "functional ignorance" of the more significant adaptive aspects of their trading institutions. To both the Yąnomamö and the Trobrianders, the mechanisms by which peoples from different groups are compelled to visit each other are ends in themselves and are not conceived to be related to the establishment of either economic or political interdependency. For the Yąnomamö participant in a feast, the feast itself has its significance in the marvelous quantities of food, the excitement of the dance, and the satisfaction of having others admire and covet the fine decorations he wears. The enchantment of the dance issues from the dancer's awareness that, for a brief moment, he is a glorious peacock that commands the admiration of his fellows, and it is his responsibility and desire to present a spectacular display of his dance steps and gawdy accouterments. In this brief, ego-building moment, each man has an opportunity to display himself, spinning and prancing about the village periphery, chest puffed out, while all watch, admire, and cheer wildly.

The hosts, too, have an opportunity to display themselves and strut before their guests. Moreover, the very fact that they have given the feast is in itself a display of affluence and surfeit apparently calculated to challenge the guests to reciprocate with an equally grandiose feast at a later date.[1] Each good feast deserves and calls forth another, and in this way allies become better acquainted with each other as they reciprocate feasts during the dry season and over the years.

Historical Background to a Particular Feast

One of the feasts I witnessed exhibited all the features of intervillage politics. Before describing this feast, I will give the historical antecedents to the event, recapitulating a number of points discussed in Chapter 3 in the context of the history of Kąobawä's village. The significance of the events will then become clear, for Kąobawä's prior relationships to the guests at the feast had a great deal to do with the outcome.

In 1950 Kąobawä's group, almost friendless, beleaguered by enemies, and somewhat isolated, began cultivating an alliance with the Iwahikoroba-teri (see map, Fig. 2–8), a Shamatari village, some two days' traveling distance southeast of their own village at Kreiböwei. The Iwahikoroba-teri were on friendly terms with another Shamatari group, the Möwaraoba-teri, from whom they had separated some years before. Kąobawä's group, on the other hand, was at war with this village because members of his own group murdered a friendly Möwaraoba-teri visitor in 1960, touching off a series of raids between them. Anxious to develop an alliance, Kąobawä's group accepted a feast invitation from the Iwahikoroba-teri and visited that village to participate in the feast. Up to that point they were only on trading terms with them.

The Iwahikoroba-teri, however, had made a prior arrangement with their friends, the Möwaraoba-teri, to help them massacre Kąobawä's men and abduct his group's women. The Möwaraoba-teri were hidden in the jungle outside the village when Kąo-

[1] The competitive aspects of feasting in many primitive societies has been dealt with at length by Marcel Mauss, whose essay *The Gift* is now an anthropological classic.

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bawĩ's group arrived. The men of Kaobawĩ's group danced both singly and en masse and were invited into the homes of their hosts. At this point their hosts fell upon them with axes and staves, killing about a dozen men before the visitors could break through the palisade and escape. Kaobawĩ's father was among the victims. Once outside, they were shot from ambush by the Mõwaraoba-teri, who managed to kill a few more and wound many others with arrows. A number of women and girls were captured by the hosts, though some were later recaptured by Kaobawĩ's group in revenge raids. It was probably their host's greed for the women that permitted any survivors at all, as my informants asserted that the Iwahikoroba-teri began chasing the women while the men were still vulnerable. A few of the Iwahikoroba-teri refused to participate in the slaughter and even helped some of Kaobawĩ's group escape.

The survivors fled to Kobou, a site they had begun clearing for a new garden. Here they removed the arrow points and nursed their wounds before reluctantly returning to Kreibõwei, their only producing garden. Kobou was still too new to support the group, and hunger forced them to return to Kreibõwei. As this location was well known to their treacherous allies, they wished to abandon it as soon as possible, knowing that their enemies could easily kill the rest of the men and abduct the remaining women.

Within a week or so of the treacherous feast, the Mahekodo-teri, a visiting ally of Kaobawĩ's group, learned of the massacre and offered aid. The Mahekodo-teri headman himself visited Kaobawĩ's village and invited the entire group to his village to take refuge. They accepted the offer, and in January of 1951, after conducting one revenge raid on the enemies, moved to Mahekodo-teri.

The Mahekodo-teri had been allied to Kaobawĩ's group a generation earlier, but after Kaobawĩ's group moved away from the Orinoco River, alliance activity had dwindled to just sporadic trading. True to Yąnomamõ political behavior, the Mahekodo-teri, being in an obviously stronger bargaining position, offered their protection and aid with gain in mind: they demanded and received a number of their guests' women. Again, the members of Kaobawĩ's group suspected further treachery from their new protectors and assiduously worked at establishing a new garden. They were forced to stay with the Mahekodo-teri until their new garden could totally support them—about a year. Even during this time, however, they spent weeks on end away from their host's village, carrying their food with them and working on their new plantations. They would return to obtain new food supplies, rest for a few weeks, and leave again. When Mahekodo-teri later split into three factions, Kaobawĩ and his group learned from one of them the details of a plot in which the Mahekodo-teri were going to kill the men and abduct the women. The only thing that prevented them from doing so was the development of a new war between Mahekodo-teri and another village, one that required the assistance of Kaobawĩ and his group.

For a few years after the separation from Mahekodo-teri, Kaobawĩ's group was invited to feast there. Because they suspected that the Mahekodo-teri were plotting against them, however, usually the men alone would attend the feast, thereby reducing the probability of another massacre. The women and children were concealed in the jungle during the time the men were away at the feast. Gradually, the alliance cooled off again and the two groups remained relatively indifferent towards each other, but at peace.

By 1960, Kaobawĩ's group had regained some of its military strength and had

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begun cultivating an alliance with a third Shamatari group, one that was related to the two that conducted the massacre in 1950. The new Shamatari group, Paruritawä-teri (see map, Fig. 2–8), was at war with the Iwahikoroba-teri, but on feasting terms with the Möwaraoba-teri. Kąobawä's group persuaded their new Shamatari allies to invite the Möwaraoba-teri to a feast and planned a massacre similar to that of 1950, but with the tables reversed: Kąobawä's group would lie in ambush, while the Paruritawä-teri attacked the guests within the village. The Möwaraoba-teri were being ravished by a malaria epidemic at this time, and only a handful of them actually came to the feast: The others were too sick to travel. With the aid of their newly found allies, Kąobawä's group managed to kill three of the five men and abducted four of their women. The other two visitors escaped to tell of the treachery. This revenge feast was only considered to be partially successful, and Kąobawä's group was not satisfied with the outcome. Their Shamatari allies, Paruritawä-teri, were obliged to abandon their site to avoid the revenge raids, splitting into two groups in the process: Mõmariböwei-teri and Reyaboböwei-teri, both continuing to remain friendly to Kąobawä's group.

In early 1965, just a few months after I began my fieldwork, Kąobawä and his supporters left to visit Reyaboböwei-teri, one of the two Shamatari allies, hoping to conduct another treacherous feast for the Möwaraoba-teri. They left a few men behind to protect the women and children. The men were gone almost two weeks. All during this time, those who remained behind flocked to my mud hut at dawn and remained in it the whole day, not permitting me to leave. Every hour or so they asked to see my shotgun. I soon discovered that they were frightened and suspected that the Widokaiya-teri were going to raid them to abduct women, for they knew of the plot. My hut lay on the path most likely to be taken by Widokaiya-teri raiders, and the few remaining men stood guard next to my door, hoping to intercept the raiders should they attack at night.

I, unknowingly, guarded the women and children by day with my shotgun, while the men did the same at night with their own weapons. This incident indelibly underscores the almost complete lack of trust between allies; the members of Kąobawä's group expected a raid from their friends and allies rather than from their enemies!

About ten days after the men had left, six visitors from another allied village passed through Upper Bisaasi-teri hoping to trade. It was obvious to them that the men were away and that the women were frightened. They carried word of the situation up the Orinoco River to their own allies, one of which was the Mahekodo-teri.

The evening before the men returned from their trip, one of the Salesian Missionaries, Padre Luiz Cocco, visited me, having traveled up the Orinoco River by dark—a dangerous undertaking at that time of the year. Padre Cocco had just received word by short-wave radio from the mission at Mahekodo-teri that a large party of men had left for Bisaasi-teri intent on capturing women. They had learned of the poorly guarded women from the six visitors and were determined to take advantage of the situation.

My house was full of women and children at dawn the following day, and the raiders were probably en route. I was in a difficult situation. On the one hand, if I told the Indians of the rumor, it would have been sufficient cause to start a war between Kąobawä's group and the Mahekodo-teri. This would have been most unfortunate if the story proved to be false. On the other hand, I dared not remain silent. If raiders were indeed coming, they would probably kill the defenders to capture the women. Fortunately, Kąobawä and the men returned early in the afternoon, and I was able to remain

neutral. The treacherous feast for their Shamatari enemies proved to be unsuccessful: The intended victims had accepted the invitation, but were informed of the plot just before they arrived. One of the Reyaboböwei-teri who had close kinsmen among them had misgivings about the matter and warned them.

Late in the afternoon it was learned that the Mahekodo-teri were, in fact, in the vicinity of the village, allegedly on a "camping trip." Kąobawä, of course, suspected their story, but to demonstrate his friendship he invited them to be his guests at a feast. As he and his men had been away for nearly two weeks, there was an abundance of food in their gardens and they could easily afford to entertain the Mahekodo-teri and their traveling companions, the Boreta-teri. Together, the guests numbered about 100—after they fetched their women and children.

This sets the stage for the feast in the kind of context that makes it more intelligible: The specific historical relationships between the participants and the nature of their mutual mistrust. Now I will give the details of the events that followed.

The Feast

Perhaps because he suspected the Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri of intimidation, Kąobawä also invited the Karohi-teri to attend the feast. They are a small but dependable ally and had themselves separated from the Mahekodo-teri many years ago. This established a balance of power at the projected feast should any trouble arise, for the combination of both Boreta-teri and Mahekodo-teri was of sufficient strength to worry any host. With the aid of the Karohi-teri, Kąobawä's group was more of a match for the visitors.

The feast started out on a sour note. It is the custom of the Yąnomamö visitors to arrive only after an invitation from their hosts, sent by messenger on the day of the feast. The Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri, however, arrogantly arrived nearly a week before Kąobawä's group was prepared to receive them and set up a large, temporary camp a short distance from the village. They were guests and could legitimately demand to be fed. Because of this, Kąobawä and his covillagers were under obligation to feed them, some hundred or so people, and took them to the gardens to supply them with enough plantains to last a week. Kąobawä was a little disturbed that they would be so impolite as to arrive uninvited, but took the situation quite philosophically. After all, they had fed his group for the better part of a year.

He and several other men cut a large quantity of plantains, which were hung in his house and allowed to ripen for a week, to be boiled into *dáte*, a thick, sweet soup, on the day of the feast. That afternoon Kąobawä and a few of the older men commissioned a hunting party comprised of young men, several of whom were Kąobawä's brothers, whose responsibility would be to obtain a large quantity of fresh meat to give to the visitors on the day after the feast. Most of them were reluctant to go, as their feet were still sore from the trip to the Shamatari village. A few of them claimed to be sick and managed to escape recruitment into the hunting party in this way. This hunt, with the hanging of the plantains in the headman's house, initiated the feast. The excitement that usually attends a feast began at this time.

That evening the young men danced and sang in the village, an institution called *amaamo*, thereby insuring themselves with luck on the hunt. (The Yąnomamö also

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amaamo on other occasions, but invariably do so on the day the plantains are hung in the village in anticipation of a feast.) Every evening the men are away on their *hwaimmow*, the week-long hunt, the young women and girls sing and dance in the village to insure them success.

The hunters left at dawn the following morning, carrying a large supply of roasted and green plantains with them to eat while they hunted. They had picked a site some 25 miles up the Mavaca River for their hunt, as game was known to abound there. Their task was to obtain monkeys, armadillos, wild turkeys, wild pig, tapir or sloth, the only meat deemed worthy to give to guests. They would not be permitted to eat any of this game, but could consume any other game they captured, such as deer, small birds, a small species of wild turkey, or insects and fish they happened to come upon. The feast meat, however, was earmarked for the guests and could not be eaten by the hunters. On this particular hunting trip the men miscalculated the amount of food they would need to sustain them during the hunt, and one of them returned after four days to fetch more plantains. He also gave Kąobawä a report on the hunt's success, creating a small sensation in the village: They had already killed a large number of *kaalo*, a particularly large and very desirable monkey. They had also come upon a quantity of turtle eggs at a sand bar and were eating as many as they could. When they returned later, they cached the remaining eggs in my house, so as not to have to share them with the visitors.

Meanwhile, the visitors were making gluttons of themselves, and the hosts started to grumble about the large number of plantains they had already eaten. The week's supply they originally provided had been consumed in half that time, and the guests had been given permission a second time to harvest more from their hosts' gardens. This was no way for guests to behave, and it soon became apparent that they were intimidating Kąobawä's group. Still, he and his followers continued to supply them with all the food they needed, keeping their complaints to themselves. They did not want it to be known that they were worried about running short of food. Instead, they planned to conduct the feast on a scale that would be difficult to reciprocate.

The hunters returned and presented their catch to Kąobawä. It was brought to his house and placed on the ground, wrapped up in leaves. Kąobawä ignored it for a while and then slowly began to unpack it (see Fig. 4-1) while everybody watched—especially the hunters, who were quite proud of the quantity of meat they had obtained: seventeen *kaalo* monkeys, seven wild turkeys, and three large armadillos. Hunting trips are not usually this successful, but the hunters had fortunately stumbled into a large band of *kaalo* and had nearly wiped it out.

Kąobawä and his group were anxious to conduct the feast for their visitors and present them with the food, because by so doing the visitors would be obliged to leave for home, thereby ending the drain on the gardens.[3]

The feast was scheduled for the day following the return of the hunters, even though the Karohi-teri had not yet arrived. Kąobawä and his group were so anxious to rid themselves of their ravenous guests by this time that they decided to hold a separate feast for the Karohi-teri on the day following the departure of the Mahekodo-teri. This would involve a considerable amount of extra work, but they were more than willing to

[3] I have seen several instances of Yąnomamö groups getting rid of visitors who have passed their unwelcome early by holding a feast in their honor; when the ceremonial food is presented, the visitors are obliged to leave.

undertake it if it meant getting rid of their first group of visitors, who, by this time, had spent nearly a week eating Kaobawä's produce.

On the morning of the feast three large pieces of bark from the *amapuri* tree were cut and brought to the village. These were made into troughs to contain the boiled, ripe plantain soup. All day long Kaobawä's younger brothers, who had returned from the hunt the day before, labored at cooking the enormous quantity of ripe plantains, pouring each boiling containerful into the trough as it was prepared.[3]

The plantains that Kaobawä had hung in his *shabono* roof a week before were now ripe. The young men who were preparing the soup would cut the bunches of plantains from the roof, split each fruit with their thumb, throw the two halves of the flesh into a cooking pot, and toss the skins onto a pile. They worked at this task from early morning until late afternoon, in addition to boiling a nearly equal quantity of green plantains, which provided the green vegetable food that customarily accompanies the presentation of meat. Yąnomamö etiquette dictates that meat must be accompanied by vegetable food and vice versa.[4] It is an insult, for example, to offer someone meat without simultaneously offering a vegetable food with it. Peeling green plantains is a little more difficult than peeling ripe ones, which are very tough and brittle. The Yąnomamö solve this problem, like they solve so many others, by using their teeth. Each plantain is bitten along its length several times, cracking the peel, which in turn is removed with the fingernails and further application of the dentition. On this particular occasion, two young men peeled, with their thumbs, enough ripe plantains to make approximately 95 gallons of soup, and, with their teeth, a sufficiently large quantity of green plantains to fill a dozen large pack-baskets.

In the morning on the day of the feast, Kaobawä went to the center of the village clearing where all could see him and proceeded to pull weeds. The clearing has to look presentable to the visitors, as it functions as the dancing plaza. As noted before, since Yąnomamö headmen cannot directly order their followers to execute tasks such as these, they usually initiate them and hope that others will follow. By and by, a number of older men joined him, as well as a few women, and when a sufficient number of workers were pulling weeds and hauling them out, Kaobawä quietly retired to his hammock, from which he oversaw the food preparations and calculated the distribution of meat.

Excitement in the village grew conspicuously as the hours passed, and by noon there was a constant din of laughter and chatter, punctuated now and then with a shrill scream from some young man overcome with the thrill of the feast. Occasionally, the visitors would reply to the shouts, setting off a brief concert of screaming between hosts

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[3] Kaobawä's group has access to aluminum pots now and uses them extensively in food preparations. Most Yąnomamö groups still use crude clay pots, although these are being rapidly replaced by aluminum ware, which is traded inland to the more remote villages.

[4] The three vegetable foods considered to be suitable accompaniments for the meat preservation are: boiled green plantains, boiled *rasha* fruit, and cassava bread. A number of missionaries and a few scientific observers have identified the Yąnomamö feast strongly with the *rasha* fruit (Zerries 1955; de Barandiaran 1966). If it is to be identified with any food, it should be called the "plantain feast," but to identify the feast with a food that sometimes (*rasha*) or invariably (plantains) accompanies it is to overlook the sociopolitical causes of the feast. *Rasha* is no more necessary to the feast than it was served at only two of six feasts I attended. In short, the Yąnomamö feast is a social and political event, not a harvest ceremony, and occurs independently of the abundance or availability of *rasha* fruit. *Rasha* fruit ripens in February, the peak of the dry season. It is only in the dry season that feasts can be held, because travel is difficult or impossible at other times of the year. The combination of the ripening of *rasha* and feasting is rather more fortuitous than causal.

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and guests that gradually died off as each group busied itself in preparation for the dance.

Shortly after noon a rumor circulated through the village that the visitors had been raiding the gardens at night and stealing plantains. A number of people, particularly older men, were visibly upset by this new information, giving rise to another rumor that there would be a chest-pounding duel to set the matter straight. The guests had already worn their welcome thin by arriving uninvited a week in advance and by eating excessively. Their hosts were becoming angry with them, as it was all too obvious that they were deliberately taxing their hosts' patience; they were intimidating them.

The men of the host group had finished their preparations for the feast; they were all painted in red and black, bearing colorful feathers. They had cleaned the debris from their houses, had finished hauling out the weeds they had picked from the village clearing, and had brought in quantities of food to give their guests. Now, it was time for them to take *ebene*, their hallucinogenic drug. They separated into several groups and began blowing the brownish-green powder up each other's nostrils with 3-foot long hollow tubes. As the drug would be administered, each recipient would reel from the concussion of air, groan, and stagger off to some convenient post to vomit. Within ten minutes of taking the drug, the men would be bleary-eyed and wild, prancing around in front of their houses, stopping occasionally to vomit or to catch their breath. In each group there would be one man particularly adept at chanting to the *hekuras*, the mountain demons, and he would soon take over the show, while the others retired to the sidelines in a stupor, green slime dripping from their nostrils. Should there be sick people in the village, the adept chanters—the *shabori*—would cure them by chanting, massaging, sucking, and vomiting out the evil spirit that caused the sickness. Otherwise, they would chant about other things, perhaps sending their *hekuras* to enemy villages to eat the souls of children, or enjoining them to prevent their enemies from doing the same. Occasionally, one of the men takes too much of the drug and become violent. On this particular occasion, Shiimima, one of Kaobawä's brothers, grabbed his bow and arrows and ran to the center of the village. This caused a minor sensation for a moment, but one of the men managed to catch and disarm him, hiding his weapons so he could not find them. Things returned to normal again, and the other participants in the drug-taking began chanting to Shiimima to restore him to his senses. The chanting lasted for an hour or so, and the participants, one by one, returned to their houses to clean up their paint jobs; most of them had smeared their careful work by vomiting all over themselves.

While the men were taking their drugs, the women were busy painting and decorating themselves with feathers and red pigment. The visitors, also, were busy at the same tasks, and the excitement of the feast reached fever proportions by mid-afternoon. A few women were still busy finishing trade baskets, while Kaobawä's younger brothers continued with the monotonous cooking of what seemed to them an endless number of plantains.

Finally, an old man from the visiting group entered the village and marched unceremoniously across the clearing while the members of Kaobawä's group cheered him. He was too old to join the dancing, but too respected to wait behind with the women and children while the younger men put on their display. This was evidence that the visitors were about to send in their delegate to accept the feast invitation at Kaobawä's house.

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The members of Lower Bisaasi-teri had joined Kąobawä's group for the feast, as they, too, were on friendly terms with the Mahekodo-teri and had benefited from the latter's hospitality after the treacherous feast in 1950. Before Kąobawä's group had separated from the Lower Bisaasi-teri, there had been one headman over the entire composite village. This was a brother to Kąobawä's father; when the groups split, the older man led the faction of Lower Bisaasi-teri, leaving Kąobawä to lead the Upper group. On this particular day, when the two groups had temporarily coalesced for the feast, the older man was conceded the honor of chanting with the visitor's delegate, Asiawä, the son of the Mahekodo-teri headman.

Ten minutes after the old visitor entered the village, Asiawä entered the clearing, touching off an explosion of wild cheering that marked the opening of the dance. He was spectacular in his bright new loin cloth, long red parrot feathers streaming from his armbands, and black monkey-tail headband covered with white buzzard down. He marched dramatically to the center of the village clearing, while all of Kąobawä's followers cheered, and struck the visitor's pose: motionless, head upward, and weapons held vertically next to his face. He stood there two or three minutes so his hosts could admire him. This gesture signified that he had come in peace and was announcing his benevolent intentions by standing where all could see him. If they bore him malice, they had to shoot him then or not at all.[5] He then marched to Kąobawä's house and was met by Kąobawä's father's brother, the temporary leader of the combined host group, and the two men immediately began to chant. This was the formal acceptance of the feast invitation by Asiawä on behalf of his entire group. They chanted for five minutes or so, bouncing up and down from the knees, now face to face, now side to side, but always lively and loud. Suddenly, they stopped, and Asiawä squatted, his back to the sun, while the host's representative retired to his hammock. The cheering died down. Asiawä squatted for several minutes before one of Kąobawä's younger brothers brought a half-gourd full of plantain soup to him and set it on the ground. He ignored it politely for several minutes, staring into the distance, holding his weapons horizontally next to his mouth. Presently, he put his weapons down, picked up the container of soup, and drained it in one draft before setting it back down. As soon as he had set it down, one of Kąobawä's younger brothers brought him a large pack-basket filled with boiled green plantains and smoked armadillo meat. Asiawä stood while the strap of the basket was placed over his head and adjusted across his shoulders so as to not crumple his headdress. Trying to look dramatic, he staggered rapidly out of the village under his burden of food, while the hosts again cheered wildly. This food was eaten by the visitors while they finished their decorating, each receiving a small portion.

Within a half-hour of Asiawä's departure the visitors had completed their decorating and had assembled just outside the entrance to the village. The men, all finely decorated, stood at the front of the gathering, while the women, girls, and young boys, also decorated, but each carrying a load of family possessions, brought up the rear. At the signal of Asiawä's father, the first two dancers burst into the village, separated, and danced around the periphery of the clearing in opposite directions, while Kąobawä's group welcomed them enthusiastically with shouts and shrill screams. Two at a time,

[5] I have a number of informants' accounts of visitors being shot down while standing in the clearing to announce their visit. Whenever I accompanied visitors to strange villages for the first time I, too, was obliged to participate in this rite and always had an uneasy feeling about it.

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the visiting dancers entered, pranced around the village periphery, wildly showing off their decorations and weapons and then returning to the group. Each dancer had unique decorations and a unique dance step, something personal that he could exhibit. He would burst into the village screaming a memorized phrase, wheel and spin, stop in his tracks, dance in place, throw his weapons down, pick them up again, aim them at the line of hosts with a wild expression on his face, prance ahead a few steps, repeat his performance, and continue on around the village in this manner, while the hosts cheered wildly. When everyone had had an individual turn, the entire group entered, danced single file around the periphery several times, and gathered at the center of the clearing, where they formed a tightly knit group. They stood motionless, except for the heaving of their chests, holding their weapons vertically. After they had stood there a few moments—in a final display of decorations—Kaobawä's followers emerged from their houses and approached the center of the village, each man inviting one or more of the visitors to his house, leading him away from the village center by the arm. As each visitor was led away, his family, watching from the village entrance, unceremoniously joined him at the host's house, bringing the family possessions along. Within a few minutes the dance plaza was deserted and the visitors were resting comfortably in their hosts' hammocks. Even in the hammocks, the Yanomamö visitors are able to put on a silent display of their finery as they lay with their legs crossed, one arm behind their head, staring at the ceiling, waiting for their hosts to feed them ripe plantain soup from the bark troughs—it is almost as if they are strutting from a reclining position.

After the guests had been given their first round of soup, the men of Kaobawä's village assembled outside the entrance and came in to dance around the village for their guests. They, too, had an opportunity to put on a display of their own decorations, after which they retired to entertain the guests.

There were three troughs full of soup in the village. The first one was emptied in the process of bringing numerous gourdsful to the some one hundred visitors (see Fig. 4-2). After they had consumed this, the guests then assembled at the second trough and began eating there. Before this trough was finished, they moved as a group to the third trough and repeated their ceremonial consumption, before returning to their hammocks to rest and regain their appetites. Approximately two hours had passed from the time the first dancers entered the village until the guests retired from the third trough of soup. They had not yet eaten all of the contents—all in all, some 95 gallons of it—but managed to do so by morning.[6]

Shortly after dark the marathon chanting (*waiyamou*) began—it continued until dawn. At dawn the visitors conducted their trade and were given the baskets of "going-home food": boiled green plantains with smoked meat. The women and children departed with the food, leaving the men behind to trade. The visitors made requests through their headman, and Kaobawä would produce the item by enjoining one of the local men to give it. The item would be thrown at the feet of the man who wanted it. He would ignore it for a while and then give it a cursory examination, throwing it back on the ground. His peers would then examine it in greater detail and extol its virtues, while the

[6] During some feasts, the ashes of the dead are mixed with the boiled, ripe plantain soup and eaten by friends and relatives of the deceased. The feast also serves as a preliminary to a raid that involves two or more villages. The sponsor of the raid will entertain his allies in a feast the day before the raiding party departs. See Chapter 9 for a discussion of the raid.

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giver would apologize for its defects. If it were a particularly poor item, just the opposite would occur; the giver would cite its not-so-obvious merits, while the recipients would draw attention to the conspicuous shortcomings. In every trade the hosts always feel as though they had been over generous, and the guests, after they depart, complain that they had not received enough. The trade was conducted in an atmosphere of efficiency, with very little argumentation. The hosts had concealed their choicest items and vigorously denied having some goods, and the guests had done likewise—sinking their prize bows in a river before arriving at feast, for example, and bringing an inferior one along in case one of the hosts asked for it during the trading. As this was the first time in some years that the two groups feasted together, there was nothing for either one to repay. Instead, the visitors asked for items *to receive*—to be repaid later—and the guests did the same.

Fig. 4-2. Guests drinking boiled ripe plantain soup at a feast; the trough is made from the bark of a large tree, scraped.

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By 8:00 A.M. the going-home food had been presented to the visitors, and the trade had been conducted. Had the visitors been polite, they would have left for home at that time. Instead, they decided to stay and witness the second, smaller, feast that Kąobawä was going to conduct for the Karohi-teri, who had not arrived in time for the major event. This capped the series of insults the visitors had heaped upon Kąobawä's group. The visitors were warned that if they should stay, the would be expected to fight in a chest-pounding duel.

It was obvious now that the visitors were looking for trouble, and Kąobawä's group was obliged to react or be subject to even further intimidation. Hence, the challenge to pound chests. At this point the visitors broke camp and departed, much to the relief and joy of Kąobawä's group. In fact, they were pleased that they had been successful in intimidating their guests into leaving, and the men gloated over this accomplishment the rest of the day. They were convinced that their threats were credible enough to force their potential adversaries to withdraw, presumably because the Mahekodo-teri felt they were inferior in strength.

Kąobawä and his group held another feast for the Karohi-teri that same day, but without the assistance of the Lower Bisaasi-teri who left shortly after the previous feast terminated.

The Chest-pounding Duel

The feast for Karohi-teri was essentially the same as the one for the Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri. When the dancing was over and darkness fell, the men began to chant again. The first pair of chanters had not completed their rhythmic presentation when the jungle around the village erupted with hoots and screams, causing all of the people in the village to jump from their hammocks and arm themselves. When the men had found their arrows and were prepared, they began yelling back at the unseen guests, rattling the shafts of their arrows together or against their bows and/or pounding the heads of axes against pieces of firewood or on the ground to make noise. The Boreta-teri and Mahekodo-teri had returned to accept the chest-pounding challenge and entered the village, each man brandishing his axe, club, or bow and arrows. They circled the village once, feinting attack on particular men among the hosts, then grouped at the center of the village clearing. The hosts surrounded them excitedly, dancing with their weapons poised to strike, then entering into the mass of bodies. Heated arguments about food theft and gluttony developed, and the hosts and guests threateningly waved their weapons in each other's faces. Within minutes the large group had bifurcated and the chest-pounding began. The Karohi-teri aided Kąobawä and his followers, whose joint numbers were even further swelled when the Lower Bisaasi-teri rushed to the village after hearing the commotion. There were about sixty adult men on each side in the fight, divided into two arenas, each comprised of hosts and guests. Two men, one from each side, would step into the center of the milling, belligerent crowd of weapon-wielding partisans, urged on by their comrades. One would step up, spread his legs apart, bare his chest, and hold his arms behind his back, daring the other to hit him. The opponent would size him up, adjust the man's chest or arms so as to give himself the greatest advantage when he struck, and then step back to deliver his close-fisted blow. The striker would painstakingly adjust

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they were about to release their arrows point-blank at Kąobawä's attackers, but when he and his aides turned them back, the crisis was over. The leaders of the visiting group rejoined the other men, some of whom had picked up glowing brands of firewood, and they backed out of the village, weapons still drawn, their way illuminated by those who were waving the brands.[7]

Kąobawä's group took no further action in this affair and was not invited to feast at Mahekodo-teri. Later in the year, their relationships worsened because of a club fight in yet another village, and for a while both groups threatened to shoot each other on sight. A temporary rapprochement developed after the club fight, when a group of raiders from Kąobawä's group met a group of hunters from Mahekodo-teri while en route to attack the village of one of their enemies. The men from both villages traded with each other and departed on friendly terms, the raiders abandoning their raid and returning to their village lest they be later ambushed on the way home by the Mahekodo-teri. They are presently on trading terms with each other, but their relationship is still somewhat strained and potentially hostile.

In general, feasts are exciting for both the hosts and the guests and contribute to their mutual solidarity. Under normal circumstances, allies that customarily feast with each other do not fight. Nevertheless, even the best allies occasionally agree beforehand to terminate their feast with a chest-pounding duel, thereby demonstrating to each other that they are friends, but capable of maintaining their sovereignty and willing to fight if necessary (Fig. 4–4). Kąobawä's group had a chest-pounding duel with one of its staunchest allies in 1966, as each had heard that the other was spreading rumors that it was cowardly. Of the six feasts I witnessed during the nineteen months I spent with the Yąnomamö, two of them ended in fighting.

Any Yąnomamö feast can potentially end in violence because of the nature of the attitudes the participants hold regarding canons of behavior and obligations to display ferocity.

Still, the feast and its attendant trade serve to reduce the possibility of neighbors fighting with each other at a more serious level of violence, and they contribute to intervillage solidarity and mutual interdependence.

[7] At this time, I was crouched in the house behind the line of bowmen, trembling in my boots.

One of Damowī's brothers—who also participated in this raid—was married to one of the victim's daughters.

The Monou-teri had anticipated their raid by clearing a new garden site across the Mavaca River, where they hoped to take refuge after the inevitable revenge raids from Patanowā-teri began. They had hoped to complete their garden before the raids became intense, as the Mavaca River would have provided a natural obstacle to raiders. The Patanowā-teri, however, were infuriated by this killing and raided the Monou-teri immediately. Two of the raiders were Damowī's "brothers."

The raiders caught Damowī outside the new garden searching for honey. This was in the first week of February. He had two of his wives with him and one child. He was looking up a tree when the raiders shot a volley of arrows into his body, at least five of which struck him in the abdomen. He managed to nock one of his own arrows and shoot at the raiders, although he was probably mortally wounded at the time. Then Bishewī, one of the raiders, shot a final arrow at Damowī, piercing his neck below his ear. He fell to the ground and died after being struck by this arrow.

The raiders did not attempt to abduct the women, as they were close to the Monou-teri campsite and they had to cross the Mavaca River to escape. The women ran back to the village to tell the others what happened. Instead of giving chase, as they ought to have done—according to Kaobawā and the others in Bisaasi-teri—the Monou-teri themselves fled into the jungle and hid until darkness, afraid that the raiders might return.

The man who fired the fatal arrow into Damowī's neck was a son of the man the Monou-teri shot in their raid. Two of the men who shot Damowī were his classificatory brothers (members of the same lineage), three were brothers-in-law (including the man who shot the fatal arrow), and one was a man who had been adopted into the Patanowā-teri village as a child, after he and his mother were abducted from a distant Shamatari village.

The Monou-teri burned the corpse of Damowī the next day. They held a mortuary ceremony that week and invited their allies, members of the two Shamatari villages and the two groups of Bisaasi-teri, to participate. Gourds of the dead man's ashes were given to specific men in several of the allied villages, an act calculated to reaffirm solidarity and friendship. Damowī's widows were given to his two eldest surviving brothers.

Kaobawā, a classificatory brother to Damowī, assumed the responsibility of organizing a revenge raid. Damowī's own brothers failed to step forward to assume this responsibility, and for a while there was no leadership whatsoever in Monou-teri. Finally, Orusiwā, the oldest and most competent member of the *Haw* lineage, emerged as the *de facto* village leader, a position he acquired largely by default. He was related to the slain headman as brother-in-law, and their respective descent groups dominated village politics.[2] Hence, leadership in Monou-teri shifted from the *Shu* lineage to the *Haw* lineage.

Kaobawā delayed the revenge raid until April, giving the Monou-teri time to expand their new garden. This date also coincided with the beginning of the rains, thus reducing the possibility of a retaliation until the next dry season and providing the Monou-teri even more time to expand their new garden and abandon the old one.

The Monou-teri were afraid to return to their producing garden, so they divided their time between their newly cleared site, where they worked at cutting timber and

[2] See Table 3-1 and Fig. 3-3 of Chapter 3 for the lineage composition of Monou-teri.

Bisasi-teri, for example, wanted to get rid of the Monou-teri, they would hold a feast in their honor. When the going-home food was presented to them, they had no alternative but to leave. It would have been insulting to remain after the food was presented. In between their moves they returned to their own producing site to collect plantains and carry them to their new garden. They subsisted there off the food they carried with them.

The Monou-teri soon resented being treated like pariahs by their allies and began to regain their courage. Much of this resentment was due to the fact that they failed to chase the raiders when Damowë was slain, displaying cowardice instead of ferocity. Many of the men in the Bisasi-teri groups resented the Monou-teri for this and were not timid about displaying their disgust. The Monou-teri were a burden, as they rarely helped at expanding Bisasi-teri's gardens and ate a good deal of the time.

The raid Kaobawë organized to revenge Damowë's death took place late in April. The Shamatari allies—Mõjamabõwei-teri and Reyabõwei-teri—were invited to participate, but they failed to send a contingency. As allies never really trust each other, the raid was delayed because some of the Bisasi-teri suspected that their allies were waiting for the raiders to leave so that they could descend on the poorly protected women and make off with captives. Finally, a few of them did arrive and the *waya itaw* (warrior line-up) got under way. Still, the Bisasi-teri feared treachery on the part of their Shamatari friends, so the men of Lower Bisasi-teri decided to stay home and protect the women left behind by the Monou-teri and Upper Bisasi-teri raiders. A small feast was held to entertain the visiting Shamatari allies.

On the afternoon of the feast a grass dummy was set up in the village, and the men who were to participate in the raid conducted a mock attack on the dummy, which was supposed to represent the body of a Patanowë-teri man. They painted themselves black, crept slowly around the village with bows and arrows ready, searching for the tracks of the enemy. They converged at one point, spread out, crept toward the dummy, and, at Kaobawë's signal, let fly with a volley of arrows. The Yanomamö are good archers. None of the arrows missed its mark, and the dummy, looking like a pincushion, toppled ominously to the ground, a dozen or more bamboo-tipped arrows protruding from it. Then the raiders screamed and ran out of the village, simulating their retreat from the enemy. They drifted back into the village, one at a time or in small groups, and retired to their hammocks to wait for darkness.

The village became unusually quiet shortly after dark. Suddenly, the stillness was pierced by an animal-like noise, half-scream and half-growl, as the first raider marched slowly out to the center of the village, clacking his arrows against his bow, growling his individualized fierce noise, usually a mimic of a carnivore: a wasp, or a buzzard. At this signal—not knowing fully what to expect and a little nervous—I crept from my own hammock and went to the center of the village with my tape recorder. The other raiders joined the first man, coming one at a time after short intervals, each clacking his arrows and growling some hideous noise. Kaobawë stood by and made sure the line was straight and faced the direction of the enemy; he would push or pull the individual warriors until they formed a perfectly straight line, joining them after the last one took his place.

The procession to the line-up took about twenty minutes, as about 50 or so men participated (see Fig. 5-2). When the last one was in line, the murmurs among the